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Arab-Israeli Talks

Peres Briefs Rabin on 'Weekend Negotiations'

NC2012111993 Paris AFP in English 1046 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Jerusalem, Dec 20 (AFP)—Israel and the PLO will meet again Tuesday [21 December] at a location still to be decided, a government spokesman said Monday amid reports of progress on the road to Palestinian self-rule.

"The talks will be in the framework of the liaison committee" to oversee implementation of autonomy, said Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's spokesman.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will head the Israeli delegation as he did in weekend negotiations in Oslo.

Peres briefed Rabin on Monday on the Oslo sessions, spokesman Gad Ben Ari told AFP, but he refused to give details.

The liaison committee was set up on October 6 when Rabin met Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo, and it was intended to sit in the Egyptian capital.

But on Friday, after two months of talks in Egypt failed to produce an accord to launch autonomy, the two sides went to Norway, where the September 13 deal was reached in secret.

Sarid [as received] took part in the Oslo talks with Peres and both men said "progress" had been made.

Israeli officials said it was unlikely that Tuesday's talks would be held in Oslo.

PLO Envoy in Oslo on Negotiations With Israel

JN1912200493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with PLO representative in Oslo 'Umar Kitmittu by Sa'id Mu'addi in the studio; date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Good evening.

[Kitmittu] Good evening to you.

[Mu'addi] Do you think the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli talks in Oslo are likely to be wrapped this evening as expected?

[Kitmittu] The talks seem likely to run until tomorrow.

[Mu'addi] What subjects will receive the most attention at this round?

[Kitmittu] The three most important points the negotiators will address are the crossings from Egypt to Gaza and from Jordan to Jericho; Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails; and the size of the area the Israelis will vacate as called for in the Declaration of Principles agreement and which Israeli is supposed to have quit on 13 December. Then there is a point that I think the Israelis will bring up, and that is protection for the settlers.

[Mu'addi] You are the link between the PLO leadership in Tunis and Palestinian negotiators in Oslo. How do you think the talks are progressing?

[Kitmittu] The three topics I mentioned earlier are still being discussed. The success of the talks will make the chances of the projected 'Arafat-Rabin meeting far more likely.

[Mu'addi] Negotiations to address the formation of the Palestinian police force are to begin tomorrow. Could you fill us in with some details about these talks?

[Kitmittu] It will be a one-day affair, hosted by Norway and attended by delegations from 15 countries. Of the Middle East participants, there will be Israel, the PLO, Egypt and Jordan, plus the European Union and Nordic states. The session will explore ways to help the process of building a Palestinian police force.

[Mu'addi] Mr. 'Umar Kitmittu, the PLO representative in Oslo, thank you very much.

[Kitmittu] Thank you.

Comments Following Talks

JN2012115393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1056 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with PLO representative in Oslo 'Umar Kitmittu by Sa'id Mu'addi in the studio, carried within the "With the Midday Events" program—live]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Mr. 'Umar, good afternoon.

[Kitmittu] Good afternoon.

[Mu'addi] Would you give us details of the results of the talks concluded in Oslo last night between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations?

[Kitmittu] The Israeli and Palestinian delegations yesterday agreed to continue the meetings between the PLO and the Israeli Government on higher levels in order to remove all obstacles, to activate the peace process, and to implement the agreement on the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington. The two sides agreed to hold a meeting very soon. I disagree with those who say that this meeting was a failure. On the contrary, this meeting further clarified both sides' viewpoints. The agreement to hold a meeting soon is a sign that the two sides will go ahead with the peace process.

[Mu'addi] Will the coming meeting be held in Oslo or in another place?

[Kitmittu] We can say nothing about this.

[Mu'addi] You are participating in the talks on the formation of a Palestinian police force, together with representatives of 15 countries. Would you give us some details about these talks?

[Kitmittu] I participate in these talks in my capacity as the PLO representative in Norway. The participants are specialized in this field. We want to come up with a way to support the formation of a Palestinian police force which will safeguard security, protect the Palestinian people, and implement the peace process within the framework of the agreement reached with Israel. So far, the speeches delivered by Dr. Nabil Sha'th and Israeli General Agmon noted that the two sides agree on the basic principles regarding the formation of this force. This encourages donor states to support the formation of the force. We can say that the meeting is proceeding in a good way.

[Mu'addi] Mr. 'Umar Kitmittu, PLO representative in Oslo, thank you very much.

[Kitmittu] Thank you, and greetings to you.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab Monetary Fund Official on Protectionism

NC1612164693 Paris AFP in English 1335 GMT 16 Dec 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec 16 (AFP)—Growing protectionism by industrial countries could hurt economic reform in Arab states as they are their main trading partners, a senior Arab official said on Thursday [16 December].

Usamah al-Faqih, chairman of the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), said industrial nations had intensified protection measures against other states as they get closer together within giant economic blocs.

"It is feared that the benefits of such measures will be confined to industrial countries," he said in a speech to an Arab economic seminar in Marrakech, Morocco, copies of which were distributed here by the AMF.

"This will constitute a major setback to the reforms in Arab and other developing states as they will find difficulty in exporting their products."

Several Arab states have launched reforms to revive their economies that have been wrecked by decades of political instability, state control, misuse of funds and discouraging investment laws.

Al-Faqih said Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Mauritania had made headway in their reforms.

"Other Arab countries are also trying to face difficulties resulting from their economic imbalances on both the local and foreign levels by encouraging the private sector and redressing financial policies," he told the conference on the "feasibility of making Arab currencies convertible."

"They have achieved results that make us optimistic. But we hope they will concentrate their reform efforts in the coming stage within a comprehensive programme that will attain sustainable growth, improve their balances of payments and increase their credit eligibility."

But al-Faqih, a Saudi, stressed Arab states must open up their economies to the "advanced countries if they want to preserve their achievements."

He said the AMF, set up by the Arab League in 1976 with a capital of 1.2 billion dollars to tackle balance of payment deficits, was now giving priority to economic reforms in member states, boosting the flagging trade among them and helping them channel investments into productive sectors.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat, Rabin Talk on Phone; To Meet 21 Dec

NC1812150593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1420 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 18 Dec (MENA)—A high-level informed Palestinian source has stated that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat told the PLO Executive Committee members at their meeting here last night that agreement has been reached setting up a meeting in Oslo within 48 hours of the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee under Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, on the Palestinian side and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres on the Israeli side.

The source said that 'Arafat told the Executive Committee members that agreement to hold this meeting was reached during yesterday's secret talks in Paris between Peres and Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-al-'Ala', head of the PLO's economic department, and that this was coordinated with the Norwegian foreign minister. The source added that the meeting is to reach a final agreement on starting to implement the Declaration of Principles. He said that if the meeting achieves its objectives, then the meeting between 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will be held on time—that is, on Tuesday [21 December].

In another development, informed sources in Tunis revealed today that Yasir 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin had a telephone conversation yesterday dealing with the latest developments in the pending issues and the date for their third summit, which is scheduled to be held in Cairo on 22 December.

The sources added that there is an intention to postpone this meeting if there are no positive results in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

PLO To Drop Demand for Control of Crossings

NC1812163193 Paris AFP in English 1459 GMT 18 Dec 93

[By Abdelhamid Maggouri]

[Excerpts] Tunis, Dec 18 (AFP)—The PLO will offer to drop its demand for sole control of crossing points during a crucial meeting with Israel in Norway aimed at unblocking the autonomy negotiations, a PLO official said here Saturday [18 December].

Chief negotiator Nabil Sha'th and other PLO officials will instead propose that an equal number of Israeli forces and Palestinian police man posts between the self-rule areas and Egypt and Jordan, the official said.

The official, a member of the PLO executive committee who asked not to be named, said the delegation would also offer some compromises in other areas which he did not specify.

The PLO delegation arrived in Cairo Friday after receiving its instructions from Tunis, and then left the Egyptian capital for Oslo on Saturday.

Israeli Radio said Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was to attend the talks in Oslo, where Norway helped the PLO and Israel first draw up a self-rule accord during secret talks in August.

In the Norwegian capital, Foreign Ministry spokesman Jan Egeland said Saturday that U.S., Russian, Egyptian and European officials would join in the talks starting Monday at 10:00 a.m. (0900 GMT) in an Oslo hotel. [passage omitted]

The Palestinians had demanded sole control over the borders. Peres said in Paris Thursday that Israel must retain full responsibility but would allow a symbolic Palestinian presence.

The Palestine Liberation Organization representative in Egypt, Sa'id Kamal, said Saturday that the delegation held talks overnight Friday with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

This meeting "prepared the ground for the holding in Oslo of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations," he said. But "the affair requires Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to intervene" to implement the autonomy accord.

Both delegations were to arrive in Oslo by Sunday, Egeland said.

Also on the PLO team travelling to Norway was Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, the organization's information department head, sources in Cairo said.

Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), an executive committee member who signed the self-rule accord with Israel, was to have led the delegation to Oslo, but PLO officials said he was in Morocco and would not attend. They gave no reason.

The Oslo meeting was arranged after Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Joergen Holst contacted Rabin and PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat when the two leaders failed to break the autonomy deadlock in a meeting in Cairo last Sunday, Egeland said.

"The two sides (then) asked Holst to organize a new meeting in Oslo," he said. It was Holst who mediated the secret Palestinian-Israeli talks.

The United States and Russia, the co-sponsors of the Arab-Israeli peace talks, also asked Norway to arrange a new meeting between Israel and the PLO, Egeland said.

These talks are designed to unblock the autonomy negotiations ahead of a new meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat, who said last Sunday that they hoped to meet again in the Egyptian capital in around 10 days.

But Israel warned on Friday there would be no agreement to implement Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho before 1994.

It was not certain that Holst, 56, would attend Monday's talks as he was hospitalized for exhaustion on Thursday in Oslo. He received treatment on November 28 for the same problem.

'Abbas Optimistic About Current Oslo Talks

NC2012122693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1120 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Rabat, 20 Dec (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, has affirmed the importance of the Egyptian role in the peace negotiations. He said that since the very beginning of the talks, Egypt has been playing a major, important, and basic role in the peace talks.

Abu-Mazin praised the Egyptian role and said Egypt is employing all its local and international energies and relations in the service of all the Arab tracks of the talks, especially the Palestinian track.

In an interview with the MENA correspondent in Morocco, Abu-Mazin said that we are in constant consultation and contact with the Egyptian leadership to exchange opinions on bolstering the peace process, "because we have great confidence in Egypt's potentials and desire to establish peace. He pointed out that Egyptian diplomacy is fully occupied with our Palestinian causes.

Abu-Mazin pointed out that most Palestinian-Israeli meetings take place in Egypt. This is because the various sides have confidence in the importance of the Egyptian role and its honest desire to establish peace. Egypt is performing its role with neutrality and a true desire to establish peace and help the Palestinians find a solution to their national cause.

Abu-Mazin expressed optimism regarding the success of the Oslo talks taking place now between the Israelis and

the Palestinians. He said the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed to be implemented, not to remain frozen. He said that by 13 April, if not in the coming weeks, we will all be in the Palestinian territories of Gaza and Jericho. [passage indistinct]

Responding to another question, Abu-Mazin affirmed that his planned visit to Moscow has not been canceled. He said that it could take place before or after New Year. He pointed out that the Russian stand supports the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations as much as possible, in view of the internal situation there which greatly affects the Russian role abroad.

Answering a question on the meeting that was slated for 13 December in Morocco between Moroccan and Israeli businessmen, Abu-Mazin said that this date was only a tentative one. A new date for a meeting is being discussed.

On his current visit to Morocco, he said that meetings are taking place between Morocco and the Palestinians within the framework of continuous discussions between the two sides. He clarified that he met with Morocco's King Hassan II during his visit. He affirmed the importance of the role King Hassan plays as a result of his international and regional contacts, as well as with the Israelis, "which is a well-known fact."

Al-Husayni on Rabin-'Arafat Summit, Borders

TA1712202093 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, "head of the Palestinian negotiating team," by Roger Tavor; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Tavor] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, the 'Arafat-Rabin meeting failed to produce practical and tangible results. Will the 10-day delay be extended, or will the meeting between the two take place? Is this interval being used to find solutions?

[Al-Husayni] If by no practical result you mean that nothing has happened on the ground, I agree with you....

[Tavor, interrupting] You mean withdrawal?

[Al-Husayni] Yes, as far as withdrawal is concerned nothing has happened on the ground. However, the 'Arafat-Rabin meeting was very important. It extricated the talks from deadlock, which could have led to the failure of the entire process. The thing that will happen after 10 days is another meeting that must include Mr. Rabin and Mr. 'Arafat.

[Tavor] Are you sure that the meeting will take place after 10 days?

[Al-Husayni] I believe that it is possible and essential for the meeting to take place after 10 days, unless there are technical difficulties or obstacles which might prevent such a meeting.

[Tavor] Mr. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh has said that if this meeting is not held, the agreement could be endangered.

[Al-Husayni] As I told you, delaying the meeting for unjustified reasons is absolutely unacceptable. However, if there are technical obstacles of which we are not aware, this is something else. Consequently, this meeting must take place at the fixed date, on 22 December, God willing. We hope that the meeting will only end by reaching appropriate solutions and understanding.

[Tavor] What are the points of disagreement between the two parties?

[Al-Husayni] The reading. Apparently, the Israeli reading differs from the Palestinian reading of the principles accord.

[Tavor] Not the translation?

[Al-Husayni] Not the translation at all. Reading and understanding the meaning of the sentences in the accord.

[Tavor] For example?

[Al-Husayni] When, for example, we say that the border issues will be postponed and discussed between us and the Israelis in the second stage. Here, we are talking about borders between us and Israel. We are not talking about the borders between us and Egypt. They are clear and established. Between us and Jordan, the borders are clear and established. This is an issue that we shall discuss with the Jordanians. Consequently, the Israelis have no connection with these borders. Therefore, not discussing the issue of borders now does not mean that the Israelis should continue controlling those borders.

[Tavor] Does talk about borders not mean that you are somehow talking about sovereignty in the interim stage, and does this not prejudice the other party?

[Al-Husayni] When we talk about borders, we are not talking about them in the concept of sovereignty and state. We are ready to accept an international presence on these borders. We are ready to have bilateral or trilateral agreements over security or similar issues, but ultimately those borders are Palestinian-Jordanian or Palestinian-Israeli borders. The arrangements over these borders should basically be made between us and them. If Israel has security demands or considerations, it is possible to reach agreement over them.

[Tavor] In a book that I received this morning and that has not been distributed to Gaza shops yet, one of the clauses of the Rabin-'Arafat agreement—translated into Arabic—says that control over the bridges and borders during the interim period will be in Israel's hands. The question is: Did popular pressure in the Palestinian street lead to Palestinian intransigence?

[Al-Husayni] There is no such agreement and there is no text which says that the bridges will be under Israeli control. The text says there will be coordination on the

issue of the bridges. Nobody has ever said that Israeli will have total control over these bridges. We are aware that there are Israeli security requirements. We are ready to address and discuss those requirements, but not in the Israeli concept.

[Tavor] Can I ask you: Why did you not warn the people or the Palestinian street that this agreement, which had an intoxicating influence on the street, would be facing problems? I believe that the misunderstanding over the agreement will lead to enhancing the opposition on both sides—in the Palestinian and Israeli streets.

[Al-Husayni] When we presented the issue to the Palestinian people we said that this beginning was a step on the road. We did not say that we are now proclaiming a state, but the thirst of the Palestinian public—and I believe of the Israeli public also—for peace made the picture look rosy to everyone. This is something natural. If you heard the recordings and statements made by us in those days, you will note that they contained this warning, but the uproar of the rosy picture stemming from these aspirations was louder than the warning.

[Tavor] You are facing a financial crisis. When will that be resolved?

[Al-Husayni] The basic and fundamental solution to this crisis will come when we assume power, when we will become responsible for collecting taxes and custom duties. All these things....

[Tavor, interrupting] An agreement was reached over them yesterday.

[Al-Husayni] Yes. Then we will be able to cover our basic expenditures and attract investors. Then work will begin, but the problem is that until we reach that phase we will be passing a very difficult stage. The main reason for which is lack of liquid assets.

[Tavor] Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, thank you very much for this interview.

PLO Executive Committee Discusses Negotiations

JN1712182193 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Muhammad Kurayshan dispatch from Tunis]

[Excerpt] Meetings of the PLO Executive Committee, which started today, will examine the results of President Yasir 'Arafat's recent tour of a number of European countries and the extent of these countries' readiness to support the development plan in the autonomy areas. However, the discussions are expected to particularly focus on the difficulties facing the current negotiations with Israel, especially since there have been reports about a possible postponement of the next summit meeting between 'Arafat and Rabin in Cairo, about which they agreed during their past meeting five days ago. Palestinian circles here do not conceal their fear of the possible complications as a result of the failure to get the negotiations with Israel to [word indistinct] points of agreement, whether with respect to the area of the Jericho region or the supervision of crossing points. Any Palestinian concessions on these two issues, coming shortly after the set date of 13 December, without the beginning of Israeli withdrawal, will put the Palestinian leadership in a very embarrassing situation, especially in light of Israeli practices in the occupied territories that continue without any change. [passage omitted]

Al-Najjab Queried on Discussions

JN1912130293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1045 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with PLO Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab in Tunis by Sa'id Mu'addi in Jerusalem; date not given; from the "With the Midday Events" program—recorded]

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee is continuing its discussion of the latest developments of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement and the formation of the Palestinian National Authority. Sa'id Mu'addi talked on this issue with Executive Committee member Sulayman al-Najjab.

[Mu'addi] Mr. al-Najjab, the PLO Executive Committee has been meeting in Tunis for two days, what is the agenda?

[Al-Najjab] The most important point on the agenda is the deadlock in the negotiations and the sharp differences on the issue of controlling crossing points and the Jericho area, as well as the area of the land that the Israelis are demanding under the pretext of protecting the security of the Gaza settlements.

We adhere to our stand, namely, that we must control the crossing points to the areas from which the Israeli army will withdraw. Without this, the withdrawal will become a new deployment of the Israeli forces. Any exercise of sovereignty for us over areas from which the army will withdraw will become meaningless. This is a basic issue and the Israeli side should take it into consideration.

[Mu'addi] Discussion is currently revolving on the transitional phase. The control over the crossings means control of the territories. Don't you believe that the terms of the agreement are perhaps given wrong interpretation?

[Al-Najjab] There is nothing wrong with our interpretations. It is true that we are in a transitional phase. However, in this phase, the Israeli Army will withdraw from the Gaza and Jericho areas. What does this withdrawal mean? Who will control these areas? In accordance with the agreement, we would be in control. Logically, in order to make this control real, we must also have control over the crossings leading to these areas.

[Mu'addi] What instructions has the PLO Executive Committee given to the Palestinian delegation participating in the Israel-Palestinian talks in Oslo?

[Al-Najjab] The same as our declared policy. While eager to remain committed to dates fixed by the agreement and not to lose this historic opportunity to reach a settlement of our dispute, we also remain committed to this agreement and to ensuring its implementation in other fields.

[Mu'addi] Is there a possibility of compromises in certain areas in order to continue the peace process and avoid aborting the Palestinian-Israeli agreement?

[Al-Najjab] The compromises that we accept are solutions that make of our control of areas vacated by the Israeli army a real and not superficial control. These areas must be really liberated and not merely remain Bantustans under the Israeli control as is the case now.

[Mu'addi] In the PLO Executive Committee meetings, do you discuss the issue of forming the Palestinian national authority?

[Al-Najjab] This subject is on the PLO Executive Committee agenda and we discuss it from its various angles, taking care that this formula will reflect the conviction of the Palestinian people that such an authority is capable of dealing with their many complicated problems—problems that we have inherited from the long years of occupation.

[Mu'addi] Thank you, Mr. al-Najjab.

[Al-Najjab] Thank you.

'Abd-al-Shafi on Oslo Talks, Palestinian Economy

JN2012120093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1100 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Interview with Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli Washington negotiations, by Ahmad 'Ubaydat in Jerusalem, date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Ubaydat] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, do you think the Oslo talks will overcome difficulties facing the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement?

['Abd-al-Shafi] It is difficult to speculate, because the clauses of the agreement can be interpreted in several ways. The Israeli side is demonstrating a very hard-line attitude. We are also in a difficult position. It is not easy for us to offer anything more than what we have already offered. Therefore, it is difficult to know what the outcome will be.

['Ubaydat] Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi, do you think Rabin and 'Arafat will meet on the date set earlier?

['Abd-al-Shafi] It is also difficult to answer this question. The negotiations are difficult. Apparently, Rabin is pursuing a very hard-line approach, and it is difficult for the Palestinian side to offer further concessions.

['Ubaydat] Jordan has announced that it will take measures to reopen bank branches in the West Bank and Gaza, even if the PLO did not agree to this. What is your reaction?

['Abd-al-Shafi] Questions between us and the Arab side should be resolved quietly through patience and calmness. We have the same interests and we must find a way that serves Arab interests, because they are the same interests.

['Ubaydat] Several economic and investment conferences have been held recently in the territories to build an infrastructure for the Palestinian economy for the future Palestinian authority. Are there studied plans for the Palestinian economy?

['Abd-al-Shafi] I personally do not know the extent of preparations. At any rate, there has to be activity. However, when it comes to the economy, everything should take into consideration the progress made on the political scene. The political question remains the basis. Of course, it is useful to address all local problems, but not more than this before progress is made on the political scene. This does not prevent handling local economic problems, such as finding job opportunities for citizens here and taking care of all aspects of the infrastructure. This would create more job opportunities. But nothing more should be done before there is real progress on the political issues.

'Abd-al-Shafi Mediating Between Fatah, PFLP

LD1912155193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks [title as heard], met this morning in Gaza city with representatives of Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] in an attempt to restore calm following serious clashes between the two groups in the Gaza Strip over the past few days. At the conclusion of the meeting, the participants published a communique promising to peacefully resolve all the outstanding differences between the two parties because their fighting—so stated the communique—only served the enemy.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that clashes between the two groups also took place today in the Rafah refugee camp. Residents of the camp reported that four people were injured by stones.

Israel, PLO Said Nearing Economic Agreement

JN1812094093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 18 Dec p 1

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Lamees K. Andoni]

[Text] Amman—The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has made progress towards a bilateral economic agreement with Israel, but nothing will be signed until the two sides reach an agreement on Palestinian autonomy, Palestinian officials said Friday [17 December].

"The two sides are drawing close to an agreement," in talks in Paris, a Palestinian official said. "But it will only be signed simultaneously with two agreements regarding Israeli withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza and transfer of Israeli administration to the Palestinians."

PLO officials said that economic negotiations were much smoother than political talks over the beginning of an Israeli withdrawal. The Dec. 13 deadline stipulated in the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO accord has been delayed due to serious differences over the interpretation of the pact's provisions.

But the PLO officials said on Friday that the PLO had been able to secure some of its demands at the Paris talks. They said that Israel had agreed to total Palestinian control over direct taxes in Jericho and the Gaza Strip." the situation will be different in the rest of the West Bank where Israel will still have control but no arrangements have been worked out yet," an Amman-based official said.

The agreed-upon provisions also involve opening the way for imports and exports between the occupied territories and the Arab World. Israel will allow the imports of Palestinian commodities—so far the Israeli market has been closed to products from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

There were still differences over tariffs, but Palestinian officials said the two sides might agree on "joint customs" to be imposed on imports.

The officials said that any Palestinian-Israeli agreement should not affect a draft Jordanian-Palestinian pact that will regulate monetary and trade between the Kingdom and the West Bank and Gaza.

PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has come under criticism for not signing the draft agreement during a short visit to Amman earlier this month.

"'Arafat did not want to be bound with a signature that could be exploited by the Israelis to undermine the Palestinian negotiations position in Paris," said an official, who has been in touch with the PLO leader over the issue.

According to the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) will regulate monetary policies and the Jordanian dinar would be the official currency in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. 'Arafat is said to be demanding Israeli permission to set up a Palestinian central bank and issue a Palestinian currency as symbols of Palestinian sovereignty. There were no indications that Israel had accepted these demands or that they will be part of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

In the view of Mr. 'Arafat and some of his aides, an Israeli-Palestinian agreement should not have any adverse effects on Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

"We need Jordan's help to prevent the subordination of our economy to Israel and to support our quest for sovereignty," the official said.

The PLO Executive Committee, meeting in Tunis, was expected to discuss relations with Jordan amid rising pressure on Mr. 'Arafat to bolster coordination with Jordan.

PLO Asks Jordan To Delay Reopening of Banks

JN2012110093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 24

[Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Walid 'Awad]

[Text] Amman—The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) appealed to Jordan on Sunday [19 December] to delay reopening Jordanian commercial banks in the West Bank until Palestinians begin implementing the Sept. 13 self-rule accord with Israel.

Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan al-Tayeb 'Abd-al-Rahim told the Jordan Times he "expressed the PLO's wish to the Kingdom to refrain from undertaking any practical steps in implementing the Jordan-Israeli memorandum of understanding until the PLO and Israel agree on implementation of the self-rule accord."

Other PLO sources said Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim contacted His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan on Saturday and requested that Jordan delay the reopening of bank branches in the West Bank in order to contain any possible misunderstandings and avoid further deterioration of Jordan-PLO relations.

"Once the PLO agrees with Israel on implementation of the self-rule accord, the PLO will be ready to sign the Jordan-PLO draft economic pact, because without it, Jordanian branches might face problems in operating in the West Bank," a Tunis-based PLO official said.

However, Jordanian officials said preparations for reopening bank branches were only awaiting the go-ahead from the Cabinet because the banking agreement was not linked to the signing of the Jordan-PLO accord.

The officials said statements made by Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi on Saturday, in which he said he asked Jordanian banks to prepare for reopening of branches once the cabinet approved the CBJ arrangements still stood.

"It is up to the government now to decide when commercial banks can open branches in the West Bank in

line with the memo of understanding we reached with Israel last month," a Jordanian official said.

Jordan and Israel signed a memo of understanding on Dec. 1 within the framework of Middle East peace talks in which Israel would allow an early reopening of Jordanian banks in the occupied West Bank. Dr. al-Nabulsi said the CBJ would oversee the operations and licensing of these branches. He said eight banks with 31 branches operated in the West Bank until 1967. Only one Jordanian bank, the Cairo-Amman Bank, operated in the West Bank since 1987, but due to severe limitations on its operations, it acted as a cash office, officials said.

Officials said the banking agreement would be submitted to the Cabinet for ratification on Tuesday. If ratified, the CBJ would have the green light to issue permits for commercial banks to reopen branches in the West Bank.

Bankers said Dr. al-Nabulsi told directors of Jordanian bankers Thursday to prepare for reopening their branches because Jordan was ready to implement the banking agreement in the next few days. They said he asked them to submit applications to the CBJ to acquire the necessary permits and licenses. Banks need written approvals from the Bank of Israel to reopen their branches in the West Bank. They said in line with the banking agreement, Israel would allow the reopening of one branch for each bank during the first six months, whereas new branches and banks would be allowed at a later stage.

Despite the absence of a PLO-Jordan economic pact, some bankers and economists said they doubted the actual implementation of the banking accord before an understanding with the PLO was reached. Some expected practical obstacles in reopening branches in the West Bank, and probably financial losses if Palestinians chose to stop using the Jordanian dinar and use the American dollar instead.

The initialling of the banking agreement between Jordan and Israel angered many PLO officials and some Palestinians inside the occupied territories, who felt the agreement was reached behind their backs, ignoring Palestinian authority in the West Bank.

PLO-Jordan relations have been cool since the announcement of the PLO-Israel accord last September. Relations deteriorated last month during PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Jordan when he evaded signing the economic agreement despite statements to the contrary before his arrival to the Kingdom.

Jordan, eager to have the economic pact signed, felt let down by the PLO chairman. A Jordanian official said the Kingdom issued a warning to the PLO that if the economic pact was not signed before Dec. 20 each side would go its own separate way. He said Jordan could not wait forever until the PLO chairman decided to ratify the economic agreement, which he chose to delay without proper explanations to the Jordanian government.

The draft agreement stipulates that the two sides agree on establishing a permanent joint monetary and banking committee to agree on monetary and banking policies during the Palestinian interim period. This committee would be authorised with licensing banks and monetary institutions etc.

However, the CBJ, according to the draft agreement, would be authorised with organising the reopening of Jordanian bank branches during the interim period as well as monitoring and supervising the branches' operations in line with Jordanian regulations and instructions.

Palestinian officials argued that the PLO was not informed about the details of the Jordan-Israel banking agreement or its actual initialling which came as a surprise although Israeli-Jordanian banking negotiations had been going on several years. But Dr. al-Nabulsi said the Palestinian side was aware of the agreement and had no objections to it.

Another Jordanian official said Mr. 'Arafat gave his blessing to the reopening of Jordanian branches in the West Bank on the basis that it would help Palestinians as well as Jordanian banks.

"Even before the Oslo self-rule accord was announced, we requested that the Jordanians provide us with a copy of the draft banking agreement they were negotiating with Israel in order to comment on it as part of the ongoing cooperation at the time, but we never received it," a Tunis-based PLO official said.

He said the PLO had requested from Jordan that it include an article which states that the banking accord would only be operative until Palestinian authority was established in the occupied lands.

"We have definitely included this phrase in our banking agreement, and it is only natural to reconsider or cancel an agreement when another authority takes over the West Bank," a Jordanian official said. "Right now, we have reached agreement with the occupying power, but when the original authority of Palestinians in the West Bank takes over, a new agreement would have to be negotiated."

Although several PLO officials justified Jordan's diminished coordination with the PLO by blaming Mr. 'Arafat for delaying the ratification of the economic pact, other officials defended the PLO chief by saying it was premature for the PLO to commit itself to economic agreements when it was not assured of the extent of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip and Jericho and who would control the border points.

"How can the PLO sign an economic agreement with Jordan on free trade and freedom of movement across the bridges if Palestinians don't control the border point between Jericho and Jordan," questioned a Palestinian economist.

Mr. 'Arafat and Palestinians in general seek to keep their options open, hoping to achieve symbols of statehood

before they sign economic agreements with either Jordan, Egypt or Israel, officials said.

They said two weeks ago, in the PLO-Israel economic talks in Paris, Israel agreed that the Palestine National Authority, which would act as government in the occupied territories during the interim period, would set up a central monetary institution, which would have all the powers of a central bank, excluding the right to issue Palestinian currency.

A central bank without the right to issue currency meant that the PNA would have to seek the CBJ's permission to carry out the CBJ's operations inside the occupied territories since the dinar is the legal tender there.

"We are quite aware of the fact that Israel is seeking to drive a wedge between Palestinians and Jordan, but unfortunately we are allowing it," one PLO official said. "Either the three parties sit down and agree or else Israel will seek bilateral accords to its advantage.'

PLO officials said it was unlikely Mr. 'Arafat would sign the economic accord in the near future. They said Mr. 'Arafat was currently preoccupied with other priorities such as securing the already delayed implementation of the PLO-Israel accord.

Palestinian Figures Protest PLO Performance

JN2012110293 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 16

[Text] Amman—QUDS PRESS—Informed Palestinian sources have said that a memorandum, prepared by Palestinian figures who support the peace process, has been officially handed to President Yasir 'Arafat. The memorandum asks the Palestinian leadership to carry out economic reforms within the PLO institutions.

The 116 Palestinian figures who signed the memorandum, include members of the Palestine National Council, university professors, and prominent journalists. The signatories to the memorandum expressed their resentment of the Palestinian leadership's way of running the PLO's affairs and the peace talks with Israel. The Palestinian figures reiterated, in the document, their adherence to the PLO and its legitimate institutions as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and an irreplaceable national framework that organizes the national potentials and leadership toward achieving all national legitimate objectives of the Palestinian people.

The memorandum says that the signatories to the document are not satisfied with the work of the political leadership at this stage neither on the level of running the negotiations nor on the level of preparations to embark on the stage of national building in the transitional period. The signatories accused the Palestinian leadership of playing its role in a way close to improvisation and without advance preparation for the steps that should be taken.

The document also criticizes the Palestinian leadership for not exerting sufficient efforts to activate national dialogue neither on the level of the national forces which have adopted the agreement nor on the level of the principled opposition to the agreement. The document notes that the political leadership did not succeed in presenting the agreement to the Palestinian people in an objective way. This, the document adds, increased confusion, ambiguity, and concerns.

The signatories to the document stressed that the majority of those who voted in favor of the Declaration of Principles in the recent PLO Central Council meeting did so on condition that the leadership improves its performance, pools Palestinian potentials, benefits from Palestinian skills and expertise wherever they are, and deals with the peace process as a militant, not administrative or bureaucratic, process.

Figures To Discuss 'Arafat's Reply

JN2012111993 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] Amman—Some 100 Palestinian cultural, media, and political figures will meet at the premises of the Palestine National Council at 1700 today to discuss Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's reply to nine demands they had previously made.

AL-DUSTUR has learned that the reply, which was conveyed by the Palestinian embassy in Amman, contained an agreement to receive a delegation comprising five to seven of those who signed the memorandum for a dialogue with the PLO Executive Committee in Tunis.

The most prominent demands made by these figures called for effecting democratic reforms within the PLO institutions, correcting the course of the negotiations, reviving the negotiations committee, launching a reconstruction council, and allowing efficient and experienced cadres to play a prominent role in the next phase.

The Palestinian People's Party drafted the memorandum, which was later endorsed by Palestinian figures.

Opposition Factions Said To Form New Alliance

JN1912135393 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 19 Dec 93 p 14

[By 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Khatib]

[Text] Informed Palestinian sources have told AL-ASWAQ that the Syrian capital may host a national conference for the Palestinian opposition which rejects the peace process and the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

These sources said the final date and venue of this conference have not yet been decided, but will be finalized at the meeting of the opposition factions in Damascus next Saturday [25 December].

The sources expected the conference to be held on 7 January because it is the anniversary of the PLO, which was established in 1964. Holding the conference on that date is a signal by these factions that they represent the Palestinian people and that Yasir 'Arafat is the one who deviated from the PLO charter and the resolutions of the Palestine National Council.

The opposition factions have almost completed the convening of popular conferences at some Palestinian refugee camps to elect representatives who will participate in this conference.

In a statement to AL-ASWAQ, Hamas Movement official spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah said following his return from Damascus, where he attended a meeting for the 10 factions late last week, that the 10 factions have passed the static stage through which it passed for a long time. These factions agreed on an alliance formula under the title of the Palestinian Forces Alliance, without reference to political identity or ideology.

Ghawshah emphasized that these factions, which this time were represented by their general secretaries, have agreed on a political program that is summed up in commitment to the Palestinian National Charter, support for and continuation of the intifadah, rejection of the Gaza-Jericho agreement and work for aborting it.

The 10 factions also agreed to form a new field leadership for the intifadah to replace the Unified National Leadership that currently supervises the intifadah activities. They also agreed to work for building the PLO establishments on democratic bases and to adhere to the Palestine question in its capacity as an Arab-Islamic cause.

Answering a question, Ghawshah said the organizational formula of the alliance will be discussed and approved at the meeting that will be held in Damascus next Saturday. The meeting will discuss the leadership's structure, number, tasks, and place of residence. Following this discussion, the Palestinian Forces Alliance will be officially launched after approving its final shape and formula. This has been accepted as a compromise after the failure of the previous formula, which was called the National-Islamic Alliance, on which some 10 factions members showed reservations.

It is clear that the question of an alternative to the PLO has been surpassed, because these factions are viewed as the ones who represent the PLO, its charter, and programs, and those who deviated are the members of Palestinian negotiating team represented by Yasir 'Arafat, and Fatah in particular. This formula has put an end to the two views that have been presented within the Palestinian opposition circles.

Algeria

Islamic Front's Kebir Sets Conditions for Talks

AU1712115593 Paris AFP in English 1127 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Bonn, Dec 17 (AFP)—The top overseas leader of Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) set five conditions here Friday for resuming talks with the Algerian Government.

Speaking at a news conference, Rabah Kebir called for:

- The release of all political prisoners in Algeria,
- The lifting of laws and regulations passed after the military takeover,
- Creation of a "free and independent" committee, not controlled by the government and incorporating all the main political forces in Algeria,
- Bringing to trial those "responsible for barbarous acts, notably recent killings,
- Opening talks between the FIS and the current Algiers leadership, in a neutral country to be chosen by the two sides.

More than 100 people have been killed in unrest in Algeria since the country's political crisis began when the general election of December 1991 was cancelled because the FIS had taken a commanding lead in the first round of voting.

In the past few weeks Islamic fundamentalists have specifically targeted foreigners. Twelve Croatians and Bosnians working south of the capital had their throats cut Tuesday [14 December] night.

A national dialogue commission was formed to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis but no headway has been made to date because of uncertainty about how to involve the FIS.

FIS politicians have previously said a condition of their joining the talks has to be the release of FIS top leaders Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, who were jailed in 1991 for 12 years on state security charges.

Kebir Denies Killing of Foreigners

LD1712172993 Hamburg DPA in German 1148 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Bonn (DPA)—A leading member of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which is banned in Algeria, today denied that the organization is responsible for the murders of foreigners in his country, but also refused to condemn these acts of terror. Rabah Kebir, spokesman of the FIS foreign executive office, told journalists that "the FIS is not behind the call to murder." "Sections of the population which have been deceived and raped by the government are doing things which can no longer be controlled," he added.

Kebir pointed out that the FIS was forced to go underground since being outlawed in early January, saying "it cannot be expected to assume responsibility for developments in Algeria under these circumstances." He also made it clear that foreigners who cooperate with the government "are not welcome." The murders showed that the people have chosen the "path of revolution" following the failure of dialogue. "As the French Revolution showed, revolutions are uncontrollable."

Since September, 23 foreigners have been killed by fundamentalist terrorists. An ultimatum issued by the "Armed Islamic Group" ran out 1 December. The ultimatum called on all foreigners to leave the country, which has led to a mass exodus.

The FIS is prepared to hold talks with the government in Algiers on the following conditions: Release of all political prisoners; suspension of all laws adopted after the January 1992 putsch; establishment of an independent committee to investigate the putsch and punish all guilty parties; complete freedom of movement for all FIS leaders. This is a "package," he said, whose elements cannot be separated.

Kebir denied that the FIS has received any support from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, or Saudi Arabia. He also said that the imprisoned FIS [deputy] leader 'Ali Belhadj has been on hunger strike since Sunday, after those in charge made his prison conditions harsher because of a letter. The FIS was informed of this and other events by contacts in the Algerian secret service.

Conditions 'Tougher' Than Government's

NC1712174493 Paris AFP in English 1628 GMT 17 Dec 93

[By Hassan Zenati]

[Text] Algiers, Dec 17 (AFP)—The conditions set Friday by Rabah Kebir, the banned Islamic Salvation Front's overseas leader, for negotiating with the Algerian Government are tougher than those demanded by the group's domestic leadership.

Speaking at a news conference in Bonn, Kebir said Algiers must fulfill five conditions before his organization would join talks on the political crisis which has spawned dozens of politically-motivated killings, most of them claimed by Moslem fundamentalists seeking to overthrow the government.

Kebir, who fled to Bonn in August 1992, appeared to have anticipated decisions that the FIS's leadership in Algeria—particularly founder members of the front's Majlis Ech-Choura or supreme council—might be about to make, political analysts said.

He upped the ante by calling, as his first condition, for the release of jailed FIS leaders and all other political prisoners in Algeria.

By political detainees, the FIS usually means its national leadership, sentenced by a military court to 12 years in

prison in July 1992, along with its locally elected legislators, subsequently stripped of their positions, and followers arrested after legislative elections which the FIS was set to win were cancelled in December 1991.

Justice Minister Mohammed Teguia has put their number at 5,000.

But according to the president of the Algerian Human Rights Defense League, Ali-Yahya Abdennour, another several thousand FIS militants and sympathizers remain held in camps in southern Algeria.

Six of the FIS's founder members recently called for the release of the movement's jailed leaders, in reaction to an invitation by Major-General Mohammed Touati to join the Commission for National Dialogue's debates on a solution to the political crisis.

Touati, who was speaking as a representative of the armed forces in the Commission, ruled out the FIS participating in the talks as a bona fide political party however.

Two more of Kebir's conditions seemed almost impossible to fulfill—trying those responsible for "barbarous acts, notably recent killings" and choosing "a neutral country for starting up a dialogue between the FIS and the (Algerian) leadership."

Kebir also called for the "repeal of laws and regulations passed after the military putsch" and the creation of a "free and independent committee, not controlled by the government" and "grouping main political forces in the country" and leading figures from other walks of life.

He was referring particularly to legislation on the state of emergency imposed in February 1992, a curfew imposed in 10 central Algerian provinces, and a decree-law on "terrorism and subversion" under which three special courts were set up which have sentenced 396 Moslem radicals to death.

Dialogue Commission Proposes Jan 1994 Conference

LD1812172793 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The National Dialogue Commission has proposed holding the National Dialogue conference in the last week of January 1994. The Higher State Council [HCE] took note of the suggestion and will request that the Higher Security Council convene to discuss the issue, according to an HCE statement released today. The statement was issued after today's meeting between the HCE Council and the National Dialogue Commission at the presidency.

Higher State Council Mandate Extended to 31 Jan

LD1912183093 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Dear listeners, peace be upon you. Welcome to this news summary, which will be devoted to the statement of the Higher Security Council issued a short while ago:

The national dialogue conference will be convened on 25 and 26 January 1994; the mandate of Higher State Council [HCE] will be extended until but not later than 31 January 1994. This was stated in the Higher Security Council's statement.

Following is the text:

The Higher Security Council convened today, 19 December 1993, at the presidency, in view of the decision issued by the Constitutional Council on 11 January 1992 that stipulates that institutions empowered with constitutional powers must, in accordance with Articles 24, 75, 79, 129, 130, and 135 of the Constitution, oversee the continuity of the state until the necessary conditions for the normal running of institutions and the constitutional system became available.

In view of the Higher Security Council's statement on 14 January 1992, which was issued in implementation of the aforementioned Constitutional Council's decision—specifically, point four—of this statement which stipulated that the Higher State Council's mandate cannot exceed the end of the presidential term emanating from the December elections in 1988;

In view of the fact that the presidential term emanating from the December elections in 1988 would have ended on 27 December 1993; and in view of the fact that the HCE, for the sake of returning to the normal running of the institutions, has commissioned the National Dialogue Commission to make every effort to prepare for as wide a national consensus as possible by set dates which should stem from a national conference that would bring together the political parties, organizations, and figures from the society.

In view of the National Dialogue Commission's proposal to convene the national dialogue conference during the last week of January 1993, and the Higher State Council's decision to acknowledge this proposal, and in the view of the urgent need to guarantee the permanent functioning of the state and the public authorities, the following has been announced:

—The national conference is to be convened on 25 and 26 January 1994.
—The mandate of the Higher State Council, as stipulated in the fourth paragraph of the statement of the Higher Security Council on 14 January 1992, is to be extended to no later than 31 January 1994.
—The mandate of the Higher State Council shall terminate as soon as the new presidential body is sworn in.

This statement is to be published in the official gazette of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria.

Commission Drafts Platform 'Blueprint'

LD1712234493 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] In preparation for the national conference on national dialogue, the date of which has not been set, sources close to the National Dialogue Commission have reported that the commission a few days ago began drafting a blueprint for a platform of consensus and that this document would be submitted to the parties involved in the dialogue. According to an Algerian news agency dispatch released this evening, this platform would include a number of major principles to which the participants in the national conference would be committed and which have already been endorsed by the political leaders the commission has met so far.

Over to our colleague Ahmed for more details on the major principles of this platform:

[Begin Ahmed recording] These principles include the republican nature of the Algerian state, the alternation of power, and the respect for individual freedoms. The principles also stress that the national constants, such as religion and language, should not be the monopoly of any political party or group.

The blueprint, which will be submitted to the participants in the dialogue, in preparation for the national conference, states that the mosques cannot be, under any circumstance, turned into centers for political propaganda under the cover of sermons. It adds that the Arabic language and the Amazigh [Berber] language do not need any guardianship and that they are the heritage of all Algerians. Such an idea must be entrenched in political practices and daily life.

According to the same sources, the adoption of these principles depends on the participation of political parties, associations, and prominent figures in the national conference. The acceptance of the blueprint for the platform of consensus will be regarded, the sources say, as a ticket to get into the national conference which the national dialogue commission is trying to convene.

As regards the status of the participants and their ideological leanings, the National Dialogue Commission does not consider these as criteria for selection. This was stated frankly by three of its members in statements on the radio and TV. Concerning the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], the National Dialogue Commission has stated that it distinguished clearly between this party as a party and the Islamic trend that had claimed its affiliation to the FIS. In this respect, the same sources added that the judiciary had already decided on the existence of the Islamic Salvation Front as a party and that people should not forget that many activists from this dissolved party condemn violence and love Algeria just as much as those who do not share their ideas and who advocate Islam.

From this premise, the same sources said that it was pointless to contain or ignore the Islamic trend or to try and confine it totally to violence [as heard], adding that this trend had a part to play in the country's political process providing it adhered to the laws of the Algerian state. [end recording]

Parties Urge Participation in National Dialogue

LD1912205993 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The Popular Unity Party, the Progressive Republican Party, the Islamic Arab Rally, the Islamic Amane Party, the Algerian People's Union, the Republican Party, the Just Liberating Party, the Rally for National Unity, and the Movement of Arab and Islamic Forces met at the press' club at the national radio building today.

After they met, the parties issued a statement in which they expressed a desire to participate in the national dialogue, saying that it should include all sides. The eight [as heard] parties also called on the authority to take courageous measures to calm the situation and clear the air.

FLN Leader Supports Extension of HCE's Mandate

LD1912135893 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Abdelhamid Mehri, the secretary general of the FLN [National Liberation Front], today reaffirmed his party's support for the Higher State Council's mandate to be extended until a body that stemmed from a consensus was appointed.

In an interview with L'OPINION, Abdelhamid Mehri said that the FLN did not wish to assume responsibility in the event of a power vacuum. He confirmed that his party would take part in a national dialogue conference if prior agreement was reached on all the issues raised. [passage omitted]

Movement Rejects Talks With Islamic Group

LD1712220693 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] The Movement for the Republic today held a rally at the Maghreb cinema in Oran. Its leader, Mr. Said Sadi, admitted in his speech that the political parties had failed and that it was now the turn of a popular movement, which would not be restricted by party struggles. Over to Mohamed Soufi:

[Begin recording] [Soufi] After last week's meeting in Annaba, the Movement for the Republic moved to Oran and held a mass rally at the Maghreb cinema under the chairmanship of Mr. Said Sadi. [passage omitted] After reviewing the main stages that the country has gone through in the past few years, Mr. Said Sadi talked about the national dialogue and prospects for overcoming the crisis. He then focused his speech on the concept of the

Movement for the Republic, the motives behind its creation, and the objectives it is trying to achieve.

[Sadi] Last Thursday, the Commission, which was supposedly set up to bring the views of the various parties closer, decided that the party that was responsible for the things we are experiencing every day must return to the political arena. This is unacceptable. We regard this as a risk. Brothers, I will not talk for long. The parties have failed and the current situation requires every citizen and every Algerian, men and women alike, to assume their responsibility and say no to sorrow, no to treason, no to death, and no to (?escapism). [Applause] [end recording]

Prime Minister on Economy, Political Change

LD1712132593 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1925 GMT 16 Dec 93

["Exclusive" interview with Algerian Prime Minister Redha Malek by Algerian ENTV Television and Algerian Press Service in Arabic correspondents Amar Bekhouche and Ahmed Hali; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Bekhouche] Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. Our guest this evening is Mr. Redha Malek, member of the Higher State Council [HCE] and prime minister.

Mr. Malek, welcome to the studio. You have been in charge of the Algerian Government for more than 100 days: we can say that your statements to the media have been relatively few. Today, a new and at the same time old topic has reappeared at the forefront, the topic of indebtedness and the burden it represents to the program of all Algerian governments. I believe now there is something new, and we want to start this dialogue with respect to this point: what is new as far as the indebtedness issue is concerned?

[Malek] Thank you. True, I have not been talking much. We are going through grave, very grave circumstances, and when we talk we must mull over what we say. When noise and futile talk increase, we must be a little reserved, all the more so as my method as prime minister and activist is to work more than talk. What matters to us are the decisions made in the field, not talk and promises, because our people are tired of promises and talk. They want decisions that take account of daily problems and the future of our children, our people.

When this government was formed we started work on difficult problems, in particular economic and security-related issues. I want to stress the determination of the government regarding the problems of security: we are determined to liquidate this grave phenomenon, that of terrorism. We free ourselves of terrorism and at the same time we rid ourselves of its causes. We know these causes: some are economic, some social, some cultural, and some political. What matters in this domain is that we know and must not forget that our economy has deteriorated in recent years. For this reason dealing with our economic problems was among our priorities in government.

We cannot on the one hand fight insecurity and terrorism aimed at economic enterprises and educational institutions while on the other hand tolerate a deteriorating economy, can we? This economy must be revived. We fight terrorism, but at the same time we must give the economy an opportunity to move. This is what we have been trying to do. Naturally, reviving the economy is difficult, but there are possibilities and we have started in this short period, as you said gracefully, just 100 days [to revive the economy]. We must not forget that we inherited an economic program from the previous government of Belaid Abdessalem. We adopted this program at the level of the HCE; I am a member of this council. It was also discussed at the Consultative Council.

[Bekhouche] Does this mean you have adopted it?

[Malek] This means that we have arrived at the end of the year. We have been trying to work in a pragmatic way, as the program has positive and interesting things which we cannot overlook. However, there are also new things.

What are these new things? These are what forced us into these economic problems. There are new facts such as the fall in world oil prices. This is important to our economy because our exports, as you know, are almost all oil and gas, oil and gas [repeats himself]. We export hardly anything other than oil and gas.

When you see price go down—because the government previously set its program on the basis of $20 per barrel for 1993 [sentence incomplete as heard]. But we have ended this year—as I am talking to you—with a price of a barrel of oil at $14, between 14 and 15. That is a problem.

We have reached the end of this year with $10 billion less than projected. When I spoke of indebtedness, our debts for this year reached $9.3 billion. How can you relate this to that. The foreign currency we are getting in revenues this year has become ... [sentence incomplete as heard] The sum of 9.3 billion in relation to revenues is less than $10 billion ... [sentence incomplete as heard] This is a problem which we had to deal with and we did.

Of course, we have reached a stage where we can say that Algeria, while it is in this state, cannot pay the debt servicing in cash, in foreign currency. Every month or two, millions and millions of dollars go abroad to pay for this debt.

[Bekhouche] Allow me, Mr. Prime Minister, to ask: you reached a decision to deal with the debts, according to your statement, by restructuring them.

[Malek] We studied that issue in depth and we contacted from day one when we began working on it ... [pauses]

We sent a special envoy to Washington, to the International Monetary Fund [IMF] to express Algeria's wish to open discussions again [on rescheduling its debts]. It is not the first time we have had discussions with the IMF. This time we told them: Come and see. We have to discuss cooperation between us, between Algeria and the IMF. We have to give it our backing and study these problems because debt servicing has become an unbearable burden.

As for this year, we have begun working ... [pauses] As for next year, in 1994, if oil prices continue to fall so noticeably, perhaps the debts will be more than $9 billion and the revenue will become 8 to 8.5. We would reach the stage when our revenue would be less than our...

[Bekhouche, interrupting] ... than our exports?

[Malek] Than our exports. This is a problem, a genuine problem which we must study. We told them Algeria cannot now give you cash, so how can it pay back the debts? In the past few years, from 1986 when oil prices began to fall, what was Algeria's situation? Algeria said: We will always pay off our debts and will respect the repayment schedule—[switches to French] will scrupulously respect repayment dates. [Switches back to Arabic] That is good. At the same time, how can we meet our needs. How can you import foodstuffs for your citizens, their necessary needs? We got loans and of those loans, some of them were short-term loans of 18 months. The long-term loans cannot exceed three years. That increases our indebtedness. When we borrow this year—give me loans—the following year we have to pay off those loans, the bulk of those loans which have reached a total of $25, 26 billion.

This would increase the foreign debt when we borrow this year and obtain these loans. Next year we plan to pay back these loans. Therefore, we have concluded that the debt as a whole had reached $25 or 26 billion, but in three years we should have finished the service on the debt, but how can we pay back the service while we still have the debt outstanding.

However, this is an objective matter and we cannot get away from it. This is a bitter reality. We cannot pay back $9 billion cash and at the same time go and ask for loans on a short-term basis. This is a problem which we must solve if possible. As to the debt it is quite easy to call it what you will: rescheduling, refinancing, or restructuring. All we need is to pay back $9 billion or pay back half or less than half. This is to be left to the negotiations.

However, the thing that gives me possibilities is this: We must make some move and boost the economy. This is the method chosen by the government. It would be on the basis of consultation with all the parties. [passage omitted]

We have reached the state in which there is not much option. We are compelled. We reached an extent that we cannot leave economy in the state it is in. Imports have diminished. The organizations which are in business are operating at 50 percent capacity. We must bring them input [as heard] or anything else so that they get moving. If we have the possibilities we would give these organizations a push so that they increase production and would not remain stagnant, as it is now at 50 percent. We must raise this to 70 or 80 percent. [passage omitted]

We were in contact with the IMF. We wrote to all the big states, especially the G-7 and the European states because we have relations with them. We told them that we have reached a point that we cannot pay back the service on the debts which have become very heavy as far as we are concerned. The IMF sent a delegation and we had long and broad discussions with them at the level of experts. This stage took place last Sunday. I received them on Saturday and they had gone back on Sunday.

The thing that has become clear after debating so many points is, after looking at the balance of the coming year, that we should ask for an easing of the debts because the loans from abroad are not enough and even the loans we get from the IMF, the World Bank, and other multilateral organizations are not enough to balance the budget with regard to the foreign finance.

Due to this there is now one point we are going along with: relieving the debt burden. Negotiations will start as of next month, in January, to find a solution for some of the basic points which remain unresolved. Perhaps, these meetings at the expert level will provide an opportunity to reach a closer position on the facts. We are discussing all the facts, the things that can be resolved [now] and those which can be solved later and might perhaps require political decisions.

[Bekhouche] What are the effects of this choice? What is the social price, the political price for the government and the country as a whole? What will be the effect on the dinar, on inflation, on ... [question incomplete as heard]

[Malek] Of course, there are effects. There is a positive side in that the country will have a greater capacity to revive the economy. Some of the imports will be better if we pay for the goods directly in hard currency instead of through short-term loans. That means that perhaps we can decrease these short-term loans because we will have the capabilities. These will allow us to economize because when you buy something with a short-term loan, the product you want to buy could perhaps be 25 percent more expensive. That is completely absurd. We have to overcome this situation and have more capabilities to move our economy forward a bit.

To push our economy forward, we need to give some priorities to construction, to farming, which has become a catastrophe. We have to move radically in that field. We need to give priority to small enterprises. We need to support these medium-sized and small enterprises because they are playing a role. As I said, during these 100 days we have provided facilities to supply these small enterprises with hard currency to allow them to

acquire some things—just so they could get their business moving. The request for hard currency was closed and we opened the doors a bit in that area. That had a good effect.

[Bekhouche] But Mr. Prime Minister, what concerns the citizen is the repercussions of the situation on his daily life. What is the effect going to be on prices?

[Malek] This is still ... [pauses] We will deal with this at another time. As I said we are still in a state of negotiations. We have not reached, we have not, one cannot... [pauses] But we know that what is called an agreement with the IMF, whatever the agreement may be, contains conditions. Everyone has said that your economy must move. For it to move forward, you have to discuss overstaffing in state-owned enterprises and offices, particularly as people are working, but no progress is achieved. One must be productive. You must be productive if our idea is to advance the economy. To advance the economy means that one repairs that economy and makes it more effective by restructuring enterprises.

We have been talking about it for years. Previous governments always talked about this restructuring. Until today, we have not entered into this field. It is time to go ahead in this field. In this short time that we have been working, we have had several consultations and contacts with the economic operators and these enterprises which want to work. We met them, sat down with them, and we did the same with the banks. We spoke to the union and described the situation concerning these foreign budgetary problems.

We cannot carry on in this way. We cannot continue. We have to change our policy on the basis of objective facts, in-depth studies and consultations with all parties.

We have discussed the matter with employers, trade-unions, and representatives of state-owned companies. There are naturally things which may be negative because we are told we must streamline and reduce the workforce because there is a lot of neglect.

[Hali] You mean workers in the state-own companies will be made redundant?

[Malek] Well, they are not really redundancies but the state-owned companies have their restructuring plans. Some companies have been studying for years such matters and will come up with restructuring plans to have a stronger and more effective production if they take specific measures. These measures obviously include redundancies but this does not mean that workers will be made redundant just like that. Not at all. Some workers might take their retirement and others might go to another company because other companies and other installations will be built. Some workers might also go to the private sector. This private sector must play its role because we are moving into a market economy. When we talk about market economy, this means that we allow free enterprise. This is why we say in our program that we will support all those who believe in free enterprise and who work and set up companies with a production that will serve the country. This is the thing we are talking about.

[Bekhouche] Since we are talking about the market economy I have a question: market economy needs means and capabilities, does Mr. Malek's government have the means for a market economy in its program? Allow me also this little digression: some are saying that Mr. Malek's government has not announced its program yet.

[Malek] I have already told you that we cannot issue texts just for the sake of it. These texts must be based on reality, and we are examining this reality at the moment and we are examining, as I have said, these new facts regarding oil. These facts are of paramount importance because Algeria lives out of this oil, out of the barrel of oil. We are working to come up with, for example, the 1994 finance law which falls within this framework. This law will include for instance facilities for the economic operators. There will also be facilities for trade and real estate deals. In this respect, we have reduced the tax on a sale of property to enable people to buy and sell to encourage activity. We should not remain rigid. With respect to duties or taxes, we will try to see that they are used to improve the economic situation and promote production. Anyone who promotes production will receive from us his share of incentives with regard to taxes.

[Hali] How can we possibly move into a market economy while we are still through going a cycle of violence? How can we revive the national economy while the security situation is still ...

[Malek, interrupting] As I have told you, we are working at various levels: at the security level and at the economic and social levels. We are taking all levels into consideration. Naturally, with respect to the security problem, I told you that the government was determined and was taking the necessary measures—we have taken numerous measures which do not need to be dealt with now—but there are measures which will guarantee that we move forward toward solving this problem which is now threatening the existence of the country. There is no hesitation in this field. There is a state and this state is not represented by individuals. People must understand this. Many Algerians sacrificed their lives for the Algerian state. This state is now threatened. The security forces, from the National People's Army, the gendarmerie, and the police, are carrying out this great action, and I say that they are playing an historic role in this period because they are defending the existence of the state; this state for which their predecessors in the National Liberation Army sacrificed their lives during the Algerian revolution.

Efforts must continue because the state must be renovated. It must be strong and it must have credibility. Naturally, it may seem that it lost its credibility at a given time because there were certain patterns of behavior and many other things. We must talk about these matters one day. However, we must give the state

a new breath of life and it must be present throughout the national territory. It must also have its prestige and have a role [to play].

[Hali] Foreign technical assistants are concerned now. How will you tackle this issue?

[Malek] If you want to talk about this issue, so be it. The thing we notice is first that the authorities are determined to take all the necessary measures and decisions to maintain order and preserve the existence of this country. This terrorism is hitting people, ordinary people, senior state officials—and if I have to name them I will have to name them one by one because each one of them has his own importance, and these include the late director of the TV network, Mr. Abada. A few days ago, they killed an excellent diplomat, the late Salah Fellah, who was one of the most prominent Algerian diplomats.

We can talk about Boukhobza [slain judge] and Djaout [journalist] and a lot of other colleagues. This is totally unacceptable. We cannot accept it. This is unforgivable because shooting them is like shooting the Algerian state and entity. This is wholly unacceptable. This Benbabda or that Ben so-and-so, what is their fault? They are Algerians serving the country, so you go and kill them! This is totally unacceptable. The Algerian Government does not accept it at all and that is final. [pauses]

Just when we issued the investment law and had given foreign partners the opportunity to cooperate with us, we started attacking foreigners. This is something unforgivable, because those foreigners came to help us and to provide us with some of their technology and expertise to help advance and build Algeria. Now, you come and kill them. This is unforgivable, because it harms and deforms Algeria and Islam itself. We have reached the point at which we should distinguish between terrorism and Islam. Genuine Islam has nothing to do with terrorism.

Islam never says go and kill somebody or kill a foreigner. Islam has nothing to do with it. Those who disguise themselves under the cover of Islam and its banner are 100-percent wrong. Islam is against such behavior and categorically condemns it.

When we see Islam—Abdelhamid Bin Badis [Islamic scholar in 1930s], God rest his soul, what did he say? He used to say I do not differentiate between Fatimah and Mary. That was during the occupation. He used to say he did not differentiate between this one being a Christian and that one being a Muslim, all of them were children from human beings. He had a humane view. A human being, regardless of his creed or religion, was to be respected.

I remember what Prince Abdelkader, God rest his soul, did. He was a pioneer of the Algerian resistance in 1830, in the previous century. He was the mujahid, leading the struggle [jihad] against the occupation's army. When he was in exile in Damascus, raging demonstrations took place one day against the French, British, Russian, and American consuls. They killed and burned these consulates. Prince Abdelkader came out and told them: Stop. That is taboo. Go home. What have they done to you? They are representatives of those countries. Why did you go to them?

He was asked about this incident: Why did you do that, Prince Abdelkader? He replied and I quote: I did that on the basis of my Mohammedan creed and in respect for the rights of humanity.

That is what Prince Abdelkader said in the 19th century and today, as we approach the end of the 20th century, we witness such behavior. Yesterday they killed 11 or 12—a group of Croats who were working here and were about to leave; they killed them. These assassinations are incredible. Algeria will be accountable for this. The price will be very high in this respect.

Those people should understand that Islam has nothing to do with it, and it is unacceptable for them to disguise themselves under this cover. All the ulema in the entire history of Islam Imam Malek Bin Annas, Ahmed Bin Hanbal, Imam al-Shafi'i, Abu Hanifa—what do they all say? They say sedition is unacceptable. What those who stray from the path, the law, and authority get in return is well-known in Islam. It is not at all acceptable, even if they chant Islam and speak in the name of Islam. The scholars who are right, scholars at the outset of Islam totally condemned these actions. Today, we must strongly condemn them.

[Bekhouche] Mr. Prime Minister, as a guest in your capacity as a member of the HCE to talk about the current stage that the country is in on the national sphere, one of the ways to get out of this spiral of violence is national dialogue and preparing for a national conference etc. We would like to hear the evaluation of the prime minister of this stage—is the government of Redha Malek concerned with the stages and political horizons that are almost on the doorstep? We would like to know.

[Malek] When the HCE formed the National Dialogue Commission, it said it was going through the era of democracy and would continue plurality. We accept plurality, the freedom of expression—all these democratic phenomena which still exist. We stopped the election process, but democracy still remains and is on the books. The parties in the sphere which respect the law and the democratic game, we welcome them and hold a dialogue with them. We will solve with them some crucial problems like this terrorism which we face. The country has deteriorated as I said before. The country is deteriorating. We need to breathe fresh air into it because the enterprises on the local level have dissolved. They have to be restored. There is no other solution. The state's structures must be restored. It must stand on its own two feet. That is our job. Because of this came the idea to have a transitional period starting on 31 December—lasting not less than two years and not more than three. That is the platform which the HCE came up with.

It said a period of time was needed to restore the country, to prepare for a true democracy. During this time, the parties which wanted to participate and play a role had the scope to do so. Particularly during this period of time, they can prepare themselves to be parties because we sent them in the past to the elections when they were not ready. Now, they can get ready with composure and objectivity.

When efforts are made and we reach the end of this period, we can enter the elections. At that time, everyone will know how to play their role. But democracy is not just elections, elections. No.

[Hali] Mr. Prime Minister, who will run this electoral period, I mean transitional period?

[Malek] We have talked about the state, and we have talked about the continuity of the state. The state still exists. The HCE is about to disappear, and it will be replaced by a presidential body.

[Hali] Are you saying that the HCE is going?

[Malek] Yes, it is going. The HCE has to go and it will be replaced, as I said, by a presidential body. This body will run the country in the transitional period. Other institutions will be created. Consultations will be held with political parties to this effect. We will decide for example to set up an interim assembly which will act as a national assembly. It will play its part and will have powers to enable it to control the action of the government. It will have greater powers than the present consultative council.

This assembly will be made up—although this point is still be discussed—of 180 members. The parties which are cooperating and are involved in the dialogue will have a share in this institution.

Moreover, there is also the National Economic and Social Council. This is equally important because within the framework of this council many of the problems we have talked about, such as the economic, social, and cultural problems, will be discussed. Representatives of the economic and social partners will be included in this institution which will play an important role in the future.

[Bekhouche] Have these main points which you have talked about been agreed upon with the political partners?

[Malek] Now we cannot ... [pauses] An agreement on numerous matters has been reached with most of the parties involved in talks with the Commission. Let us leave the Commission get on with its work and it has the powers to move forward in this field. Obviously, the road is difficult but we must advance. This is really an opportunity for the parties to come and get involved and help in these difficult circumstances. Let us not talk too much. Of course we must talk but we cannot talk for several months with these parties. The Commission is working with objectively, and it is deploying a serious effort to achieve results. However, the parties must also act and they must come up with constructive proposals because time is running out and we cannot prolong these talks. Time will come when a decision will have to be taken. History will testify in the future and history will not forgive because today we must aware of the seriousness of the current situation. There must be total awareness and if there is such an awareness, it will not allow any maneuverings. We must enter this period—and we are entering it—with full courage and resolve.

[Bekhouche] There is a polemic, Mr. Prime Minister. If you allow me, there is now a polemic following the statements made recently by the Dialogue Commission about the representation of political persuasions from the dissolved Islamic [Salvation] Front and about who should represent them and how. Can the prime minister and member of the HCE enlighten us on this and can he say something about this polemic?

[Malek] We said that we did not want to get involved in this polemic. We said that the Commission had its own powers in its action. We drew up the principles and the guidelines. These include the need for a national consensus and a national conference in which all the forces that really serve this country and really love this country are represented. Those who have put themselves outside the law or who have problems with the law are totally unacceptable. There is not question about that because the state has principles and these principles will be respected whatever the circumstances. If there is a group of a particular persuasion which would like to put forward constructive proposals for this transitional period and which will say that it will accept the Algerian state and the values of 1 November [1954]—because unfortunately war veterans are now being killed by those who extol Islam and this is totally unacceptable [sentence incomplete as heard]. This is the Algerian state which is built on the values of 1 November, on a republican state, on democracy and on alternation of power. These are the principles which are not open to any debate and which do not allow any wheeling and dealing.

[Switches to French] Those who accept these principles and who want to work, we welcome them. Those who call into question the Algerian state and who call into question its foundations, [switches back to Arabic] will not be accepted, never, whatever the circumstances. This is what I can say about the subject.

[Hali] Mr. Prime Minister, I have a rather embarrassing question: if the mandate of the HCE ends on 31 December, what will happen to the government of Mr. Redha Malek?

[Malek] I cannot reply to this question. I have talked to you about the continuity of the state whatever the circumstances and the changes. There must be a continuity of the state. I cannot reply to your question because it is not logical. Logic says: go back to the Constitution. We are living under the shadow of the Constitution.

What does the Constitution say? The Constitution says: the prime minister is appointed by the president of the republic. I as a prime minister was appointed by the Higher State Council. If this Higher State Council were to go and was replaced by a new body, a presidential body, the Constitution says that this body, which will play the part of the president of the republic, can tell me either to continue or to leave and it can then choose another prime minister. It is perfectly entitled to do so. However, the thing I must stress is that there will be continuity of the state.

[Bekhouche] My question, probably the last: is Mr. Redha Malek, the prime minister, optimistic about the next few weeks and months and the coming year?

[Malek] Algeria has capabilities, it has opportunities, and we must know how to use them. Naturally, terrorism has hampered our march, this is true. However, this is the situation and we must face up to it with courage. If we face up to these matters with courage ... [incomplete sentence as heard] We are asking for our people to be aware and to stand against terrorism. They should not let people destroy and kill. Shaykh Mohamed Ghazali [Muslim scholar], who used to live in Constantine—I must say that I do not share many of his ideas—once said: They say this is not allowed in our country. Tell them: who are you to say that you belong somewhere? There are people who are playing with Islam and are manipulating it. This is unacceptable. The state must recover its dignity and its credibility in order to bring the country out of this impasse. If the state exists and it plays its role as it should, the country will come out of the impasse. If the state is absent as it became absent in the past few years, we will enter labyrinths which only God knows where they will lead us to. This is the problem.

If the state is strong, and we are striving toward a strong state but in an era of democracy ... [incomplete sentence as heard] We welcome democracy but the state must be strong, the people must unite, and we must come out of the period of divisions. Then we can be optimistic because the people have their own genius; and when that wakens and when they have awareness, they can overcome all these problems. This is why we are asking our people to help their state. The function of the state is not to oppress or corrupt. The state is the guarantee for the existence of the people and the nation. If there is no state—as Shaykh Abd [Muslim cleric] used to say there is no religion without a state—even Islam itself will disappear. Look at what is happening in Afghanistan, where there are Islamists who fought and so on; these people are fighting one another and killing one another while the people are looking on. What is this? We must be realistic. We are Muslims. We all believe in God and the Last Judgment. However, everything should be put in its place. Therefore, we must be frank and say that Islam rejects all this and that all these manifestations of terrorism are caused by people who do not understand Islam. They do not understand it. This is ignorance. We are opposed to ignorance and the tyranny of ignorance. These assassinations are the expression of the tyranny of ignorance. All this is totally unacceptable and no Muslim scholar will accept them. The people must also understand and mobilize. We are mobilized on this path and we will move forward God willing. Let us be serious and let us work and achieve progress. This is all.

Thank you and if there are any other questions, I am at your disposal and I will reply if I can.

[Bekhouche] I believe that we have dealt with the main points, but if there is another opportunity to meet, we will meet again, God willing. Thank you for accepting the invitation. Thank you, colleague Ahmed Hali, and thank you viewers.

Malek Urges G-7 To Help Reach Accord with IMF

LD1912131893 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] At a meeting with international media in Algiers [date not specified], Redha Malek, member of the Higher State Council and head of government, urged the G-7 countries to back up and support Algeria in order to reach a reasonable and balanced agreement with the IMF.

Redha Malek pointed out that his government was determined to hasten the pace of economic reforms in order to ensure Algeria's move to a market economy, and to make speedy efforts to reestablish security in the country to reassure foreign partners. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Musa Comments on Nuclear Weapons, Foreign Ties

NC1812160893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stressed that Egypt was never put under any pressure to abandon the idea of producing a nuclear bomb, adding that Egypt never had any intention of manufacturing such a bomb. He added that on the contrary, Egypt calls for establishing a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

Minister Musa made these remarks in response to a question on a statement by a U.S. official that Egypt had given up the idea of producing a nuclear bomb after coming under pressure by the United States.

In remarks he made today, the foreign minister pointed out that Egypt's call for establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East stems from firm principles governing Egyptian policy and has nothing to do with the U.S. position or the position of any other country. He added: This is a "principled Egyptian stand."

Musa pointed out that Egypt's stand on eliminating nuclear weapons from the Middle East is based on the premise that no exceptions or preferential treatment be

given to any country in the region. He stressed that if there are any exceptions or preferential treatment as far as nuclear weapons are concerned, this will create "a major problem" in the Middle East. He hoped that there will be no such problem.

On Iraq's withdrawal from an area on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border the day before yesterday, Musa hoped this withdrawal and other similar measures would help calm the situation between the two countries in accordance with the UN resolutions and in the best interest of both sides.

On his talks with Cypriot Foreign Minister Alekos Mikhailidhis in Cairo tomorrow, Musa said that the talks will deal with Mediterranean issues, the Cyprus question, the Balkans, and the Serbian attacks on Bosnia-Herzegovina. He added that the talks will provide a good opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

On Egyptian-Sudanese relations, Musa said that "arrangements are currently being made for a meeting between the Sudanese foreign minister and I."

Musa Interviewed on Arab-Israeli Talks

NC1812193493 Bshamun Future Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by Khalil Matar in Cairo; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Matar] Mr. Minister, everyone is awaiting the next meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin, while the Israelis are reiterating that there is no sacrosanct date for withdrawal. Is the date of 13 April not sacrosanct and could it be postponed?

[Musa] Using the expression sacrosanct gives impressions that distort the facts of the situation. The important thing is the commitment to the text of the agreement that was signed—that is, to the period of time that has been set for the withdrawal, which expires on 13 April 1993. It is important that this withdrawal is completed by that date because a number of other measures that have to be taken during the transitional stage and the final stage are dependent on it. This postponement will delay reaching a settlement. It is our view that respecting the date set for the completion of the withdrawal is extremely important.

Even if the date set for the start of the withdrawal is delayed for one or two weeks, it can be compensated for by speeding up the withdrawal steps so that the final date is complied with in full.

[Matar] Do you believe that the Israelis agree with your view?

[Musa] I believe that there is enough scope for the Israeli and Palestinian acceptance of the view we are voicing.

[Matar] There are of course a number of pending issues that have influenced and are influencing the delay. Do you expect them to reach an agreement?

[Musa] It is possible to reach an agreement. There are still a number of disputed matters but there is also common ground for the agreement because major principles are involved. One principle is that there will be an Israeli withdrawal; therefore there must be an Israeli withdrawal. A second one is that there will be a national Palestinian authority; therefore the national Palestinian authority must be established. There is also the principle that this is merely the first step; and it is in fact the first step.

This means that this first step will not accomplish everything that we desire, but it will open the door to self-government in all the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. Hence, we must act by implementing the withdrawal from the two areas we are talking about—that is Gaza and Jericho—and by the deployment of the [Israeli] forces with the aim of reducing the Israeli military presence and then transferring authority from the Israeli military or Civil Administration to the Palestinian national administration in these territories.

Negotiations over the final phase will then start in two years; and these will include the other pending issues, such as Jerusalem, the refugees, the borders, etc. These issues are interlinked and complicated. It is important that we insist on resolving them, because it is not in the interest of any party—regardless of its reasoning, whether sound or not—to let the occupation continue, whatever name it may go by, and to let it last until a miracle happens in this century or the next. We should work to end the Israeli occupation today, not tomorrow; and in return, certain settlements will be reached and agreements made on specific responsibilities that this or that side will undertake.

[Matar] These responsibilities or settlements are not clear; they differ from the text of the signed agreement. There are many interpretations of issues such as the crossing points between Gaza and Egypt and between Jericho and Jordan, on Jericho's borders, and on the dates we spoke about.

[Musa] Yes. There is no final agreement yet on all these issues. There are Palestinian views and proposals countered by Israeli ones. We are doing as much as we can to reach an agreement that is as near as possible to the Palestinian view.

[Matar] As near as possible to the Palestinian view. How, then, can a formula be found to control the border crossings?

[Musa] Within the framework of the agreement. This is a first stage within an interim stage. So, we must begin from this point. But this first stage must lead to the final stage; that is, to self-determination for the Palestinian people. Some points will be agreed upon now and become fixed, and others will be flexible; that is, what is agreed upon today will not necessarily continue for five

years or after that. There must be some flexibility at this stage, but in a way that does not contradict the Arab and Palestinian principles.

[Matar] Do you mean that there is a possibility for Israeli control of the crossing points for a certain period of time? The agreement states this.

[Musa] You do not understand me right. Now there is Israeli control; there is Israeli occupation. So far, there has been no agreement that the occupation must be removed completely and replaced by a Palestinian state. There was an agreement on the first steps to be taken. As for the crossing points, there must be a Palestinian presence. There was absolutely no such presence in the past, and now we are working for an effective and responsible one. This is what we are talking about.

[Matar] The Israelis consider this a security issue over which there can be no concessions whatsoever.

[Musa] It is true that the Israelis consider the security issue a serious one, and they are not sure about it. However, the Palestinians have a right to see clear changes in all frameworks of action in the occupied territories or in the territory where Palestinian authority will be exercised, including the crossing points. But concerning the positions of the two parties, it is up to them and we cannot speak about these positions in absolute terms. How these positions will end up is linked to the current negotiations and contacts.

[Matar] Do you expect Israel to accept a UN force at the crossing points?

[Musa] This is not being proposed, because it is not mentioned in the agreement.

[Matar] There is much confusion about Security Council Resolution 425 [concerning Lebanon] and its role in the peace process. Does the fact that the resolution was not mentioned in the UN General Assembly belittle its importance?

[Musa] Its absence does not cancel it or belittle its importance. This is a Security Council resolution that must be implemented. The UN General Assembly resolution welcoming the Palestinian-Israeli agreement is based on the Madrid peace formula and relates basically to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. Reference or nonreference to Resolution 425 was a debatable issue, and there was no unanimity over it. But when we come to the Lebanese-Israeli talks, Resolution 425 must be mentioned. The fact that the resolution was not mentioned does not mean it has been harmed. We all adhere to it. This is a Security Council resolution that should be implemented on the Israeli-Lebanese front.

[Matar] Does this mean the resolution is not linked to the Madrid formula?

[Musa] In the Madrid formula, that resolution relates to Lebanon. But Resolution 242 and the other resolutions are relevant to all other tracks.

[Matar] There is the Syrian-Israeli track and the role of the United States in pushing the two sides toward some agreement. Do you expect the summit meeting between President Hafiz al-Asad and President Bill Clinton to facilitate an agreement?

[Musa] Yes. Of course, logic says so. Such a meeting must result in something to speed up the moves on the Syrian-Israeli track; there is no doubt about it.

[Matar] It is logical, but do the negotiating positions promise something like this?

[Musa] This logic does not exist in vacuum. It is based on a reading of the current positions. There is nothing impossible about the Syrian-Israeli track. There were agreements on some points, and there were no agreements on others. This may take final shape in an agreement when Presidents al-Asad and Clinton meet.

[Matar] What things have been agreed upon?

[Musa] This issue cannot be discussed in this way. It concerns the Israelis and the Syrians. When we hear voices in Israel talking about Syrian sovereignty over the Golan, this is positive. When these voices mention the idea of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan—which is the basic negotiating problem—this is also positive. The mere fact that the Syrians and the Israelis are directly negotiating is positive; they are discussing all this. There are many positive things.

[Matar] But the price for this withdrawal and this sovereignty may not be acceptable.

[Musa] When we reach the point of what is offered and what is the price, we will discuss it. But as brother [Syrian Foreign Minister] Faruq al-Shar' said, the idea is to exchange everything for everything. He will explain what this means.

[Matar] Does Egypt take this position?

[Musa] Yes, of course. If Syria adopts it, why should we not? Everything for everything; this is natural.

[Matar] It is customary for Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak to meet before any substantial development in the region. Do you expect a meeting before [words indistinct]

[Musa] The meetings and their frequencies are already decided. Coordination between us and our brothers in Syria is continuing on all levels. Now the [Egyptian] prime minister is in Syria, and meetings on other levels may take place before the U.S.-Syrian meeting. But so far, no summit meeting has been set.

[Matar] My last question, Mr. Minister, is about the general Arab situation. Do you believe that the continuation of the Arab divisions affects the Arab negotiating position?

[Musa] It affects all developments in the region, everything in the region. The Arab divisions have existed for

a long time now, but they have their causes, of course. It is important to remove these causes so that the Arab estrangement can end. It must end; the situation cannot continue like this. But we must deal with it without slogans or overenthusiasm. We must be practical. There were reasons for the current Arab state of affairs, and these things must be resolved. I am talking about objective issues, not subjective ones.

Musa Confers With Palestinian Delegation

NC1812103093 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a round of talks last night with a Palestinian delegation that arrived in Cairo yesterday. During the meeting, which lasted until dawn today, they reviewed the obstacles to the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

The delegation, which includes PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and Palestinian negotiating delegation head Dr. Nabil Sha'th, later left Cairo for Oslo.

Further on Libyan Dissident's Disappearance

Security Source Comments

NC1812194893 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] A responsible security source, commenting on the reported disappearance of [Libyan opposition figure] Mansur al-Kikhya, has stated that the Interior Ministry agencies followed up on the matter as soon as they learned of media reports about his disappearance and reports that he had come to Egypt to attend a human rights conference held in Cairo between 30 November and 4 December 1993. We would like to point out the following facts:

1. We have not been told by any party about that meeting; we have not been informed of the names of the participants, whether from inside or outside the country; and there has been no request from any quarter for security forces protection for the participants in the aforesaid conference.
2. It is normal for scores of Arab and foreign citizens to come and go in Egypt every day with the purpose of taking part in numberous conferences, meetings, seminars, for treatment, and tourism. They come and go in a normal way without being accorded any extraordinary procedures. It is inconceivable for the security agencies to provide constant and continuous guard for each visitor to Egypt. The role of the security agencies is confined to securing the venues of the meetings and the conferences throughout their duration.
3. The results of the investigation have revealed the following:

a. Mr. Mansur al-Kikhya arrived in Egypt via Cairo International Airport on 29 November carrying an Algerian passport.

b. He checked in at Safir Hotel, where the conference is held. His stay at the hotel lasted until after the conference, which concluded on 4 December. He left the hotel at 2300 on 10 December and never returned there.

Investigations have revealed that several Libyans visited him. A telephone call was made to the hotel explaining that Mr. al-Kikhya was in the city of Alexandria in case of inquiries about him.

The security source added that so far the investigations have not led to any indication that he officially left the country via Egyptian airports or ports. A specialized investigative team continues the search and investigations.

The responsible security source denounced the attempts to defame Egypt by insinuating that as a Libyan opposition figure [khurujuh ka mu'arid libi] his departure may have occurred with the knowledge of the Egyptian security agencies. Such an idea is rejected altogether and greatly varies from the values of Egypt. Egypt does not allow such operations to be carried out on its soil, since they run counter to the principles Egypt believes in and violate its long-established values. Egypt will firmly and decisively bring to account whoever is found responsible for such actions.

Envoy on 'Special Mission' to Libya

NC1912160993 Paris AFP in English 1510 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, Dec 19 (AFP)—A senior Egyptian official left here for Libya on Sunday [19 December] for a "special mission," Egyptian officials said.

They did not say whether the mission of Usamah al-Baz, political adviser to President Husni Mubarak, was linked to the disappearance of a prominent Libyan dissident, Mansur al-Kikhya, in Cairo on December 10.

The Libyan opposition in Egypt said on Saturday it was "convinced" that al-Kikhya had been kidnapped by agents of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

THE NEW YORK TIMES reported on Sunday that U.S. President Bill Clinton sent a letter to Mubarak on Tuesday requesting his help in tracing al-Kikhya.

The Egyptian official media made no mention of the visit by al-Baz.

On Thursday the Cairo spokesman for the opposition Libyan National Salvation Front, Muhammad Jibril, told AFP the front had managed to contact al-Kikhya's brother Mahmud, who lives in Banghazi, in northeastern Libya.

"Mahmud al-Kikhya said a Libyan official had assured (Mansur) al-Kikhya's relatives that Mansur was in Libya, but did not say whether Mansur's family had managed to meet him, or whether the Libyan dissident went to Libya willingly," Jibril said.

"The Libyan opposition is convinced Mansur al-Kikhya was kidnapped by agents" of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, Jibril said. [passage omitted]

Sidqi, Delegation Return From Syrian Visit

NC1912200093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1920 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Dec (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and the delegation accompanying him returned to Cairo from Damascus this evening following a five-day visit to Syria.

During the visit Dr. Sidqi led the Egyptian delegation at the sixth session of the higher Egyptian-Syrian committee, which ended in Damascus today.

New Measure Announced for Travel to Syria

NC1812152793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Dec (MENA)—Effective today, Egyptians who wish to travel to Syria will be required to obtain a travel form from the liaison officer at the Passports, Immigration, and Naturalization Administration before departing, as part of measures to regulate the travel of citizens to Syria.

Major General Faruq 'Umar Sabri, assistant interior minister and head of this administration, who announced the aforesaid rule today, added that the new procedure seeks to protect citizens and spare them any discomfort.

'Terrorists' Ambush Police Convoy in Asyut

Source Gives Details

NC2012090193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2315 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 Dec (MENA)—A responsible security source in the Interior Ministry stated this evening that information has been received that some elements gathered in the al-Rahman Mosque area in Manfalut this evening with a view to carrying out a terrorist operation planned inside the mosque.

The source said a force from the State Security Investigation Directorate General, the Specialized Investigation Services, and the Central Security Forces in the Asyut Security Directorate surrounded the mosque at 1800 today.

The source explained that the (?elements) opened fire at the force as soon as it surrounded the mosque, prompting the security force to reply and then arrest 75 terrorist elements.

The security source said two Hulwan 9-mm pistols, two Russian- made rifles, a large quantity of ammunition, and cold steel were seized inside the mosque.

The source said that as a result, 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Halim [words indistinct] Asyut.

He added that while the force was returning to Asyut to take legal measures against the terrorist elements who were captured in Manfalut, the force commanders heard shots from [words indistinct]. The force went straight to the area, where it emerged that a group of terrorists riding in a car had ambushed Brigadier General Muhammad Qasim Tu'aym [words indistinct] in Asyut. They opened fire [words indistinct], killing him, his driver, and his bodyguard. Brig. Gen. Tu'aym's car caught fire and exploded after the gas tank was hit.

The security source said the police chased the terrorists as they fled in their car. An exchange of fire took place [words indistinct], where they were trapped between a roadblock [words indistinct] and the pursuing forces. The source added that in the exchange of fire, Captain [word indistinct] Karam 'Isa from the Asyut Criminal Investigation Department and 1st Lieutenant Basim al-Katib from the pursuing forces in Asyut were martyred and two [words indistinct] and nine soldiers [words indistinct] were wounded.

The source explained that the hot pursuit ended with the killing of the three terrorists who carried out the incident and the (?owner of the car), who was forced by the three terrorists to drive them, according to preliminary investigations.

The security source said that [words indistinct] used in the incident were seized [words indistinct].

Police General, Attackers Killed

NC2012074093 Paris AFP in English 2319 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Asyut, Egypt, Dec 20 (AFP)—Nine people including a police general were killed and 18 were injured when Moslem fundamentalists ambushed a police convoy Sunday at Asyut, 380 kilometres (240 miles) south of Cairo, police said.

The general who died was Muhammad Qassim Tu'aymah. Three policemen and a civilian were also killed.

All four of the attackers were killed in a shootout with police after they threw a grenade at the general's car as it drove past, police said.

They sped off in a car after the attack but police caught up with them on the outskirts of the town, opening fire.

Eleven policemen and seven civilians were injured in the initial attack and the shootout, police said.

Police set up roadblocks on streets where there are strategic buildings, notably outside security police headquarters.

Since Moslem fundamentalists declared war on the state early last year, 85 policemen and 84 fundamentalists have been killed.

Nearly two thirds of the policemen killed were deployed around Asyut in Upper Egypt, where the fundamentalist organisation al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah has specifically said it will target security forces.

Police Colonel Killed in Cairo

NC1812102893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1015 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Dec (MENA)—Unidentified assailants shot and killed Police Colonel Ahmad Sha'lan in Cairo's al-Matariyah area this morning after lying in ambush for him while he was on his way to work. The culprits then fled.

Cairo senior security officials and detectives left for the scene of the incident to ascertain the circumstances of the attack.

Gunmen Kill al-Qusiyah Police Station Sentry

NC2012104093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Asyut, 20 Dec (MENA)—Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Alim, a sentry at the al-Qusiyah police station in the Governorate of Asyut, was killed this morning after unidentified gunmen shot him as he headed for work. The assailants fled the scene.

A youth who was passing by when the incident took place was injured and taken to al-Qusiyah general hospital for treatment.

Six Vanguards of Conquest 'Terrorists' Hanged

NC2012102493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1010 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Six terrorists who were sentenced to death by hanging in Case No. 18 for 1993, the Vanguards of Conquest—Part One, in the military criminal courts supervised by the military prosecutor general, were hanged this morning at the appeals' prison in Cairo. They were hanged after all the legally approved measures had been taken.

The terrorists were: 'Abd-al-Hamid Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid, Khuwaylid Muhammad Barakat, Fathi Imam 'Abd-al-Hamid Hazin, Muhammad 'Abdallah Muhammad al-Sayyid, Ra'fat Mahmud Muhammad 'Uthman, and Muhammad Husam Ahmad al-Sharif.

Prosecutor Blames 'Abd-al-Rahman for Violence

NC1812171593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1610 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 Dec (MENA)—The Higher State Security Court—Emergency resumed session today in the trial of the defendants accused of illegal assembly in al-Fayyum in 1989. Forty-eight defendants, chief among them Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, are on trial.

Today the court heard Higher State Security Public Prosecutor 'Abd-al-Sami' Sharaf-al-Din's statement and decided to meet again tomorrow to continue hearing the prosecutor's remarks.

In his argument, Counselor Sharaf-al-Din noted that all the terrorist incidents and acts of violence that Egypt has seen are the result of Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman's ideology. He added that 'Abd-al-Rahman and his colleagues began walking the path of violence at the military parade ground on 6 October 1981 [site of the assassination of President Anwar al-Sadat], but their despicable criminal acts are not over. He added: The people who followed 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman's footsteps first used sticks, then firecrackers, then easy-to-make explosives, then they developed the use of firearms and explosives, and they ended up using booby-trapped cars like the one used in the recent disaster [against Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi].

Counselor 'Abd-al-Sami' Sharaf-al-Din noted that the defendants in this case had sought to overthrow the regime in Egypt. He added that through erroneous interpretations of some Koranic verses and sayings by the Prophet, 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman issued misleading fatwas to the defendants, which motivated them to commit crimes. He added that 'Abd-al-Rahman issued a fatwa sanctioning the assassination of the late President al-Sadat, another declaring tourism as sinful and sanctioning attacks on tourists in a bid to undermine the regime and the Egyptian economy, and a third sanctioning the robbing of Christians and their property. He noted that 'Abd-al-Rahman's latest fatwa was the order to blow up the World Trade Center in New York.

Counselor Sharaf-al-Din added that Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman had planned the events that took place during a gathering held on 7 April 1989 at the al-Shuhada' Mosque in al-Fayyum. The purpose of these acts, he added, was to engage in acts of violence, resist the authority, and commit a number of indiscriminate crimes.

Abduction of al-Zawahiri Reportedly Planned

NC1712140393 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 8 Dec 93 p 7

[From the "Political Week" section]

[Text] Political Week has learned that government authorities, in cooperation with international organs, concocted a plan to abduct Ayman al-Zawahiri, one of the leaders believed to be responsible for the recent incidents. Acting in coordination with the Interpol, security officials made intensive, but futile, efforts to capture al-Zawahiri.

According to well-informed sources, security officials drew up a plan to abduct Al-Zawahiri during a news conference that he was scheduled to hold in a hotel in Geneva, in Switzerland, last November.

Al-Zawahiri got wind of the scheme and canceled the news conference at the eleventh hour, citing inadequate

security at the hotel. Al-Zawahiri sent letters of apology to all the newspapers which he had invited to the conference, saying that a certain embassy had made plans to disrupt the conference. The news conference was postponed indefinitely.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Addresses al-Zawiyah Rally

LD1712171193 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1944 GMT 16 Dec 93

[Speech by leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in al-Zawiyah on 16 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] Sons of this militant town, we are now in a town that is militant, blessed, historic, and with ancient roots. [passage omitted]

Brothers, once again we are addressing the world in a sea of the sons of the al-Zawiyah. [passage omitted]

Western states should visit the archives and the museums of Italy to learn about the history of al-Zawiyah from where we are addressing them, or rather from where masses of al-Zawiyah are addressing them. Let them be told that this country, whose voice is echoing today, is the region of the 1,000 martyrs. Al-Zawiyah is proud to be the town of the 1,000 martyrs during the Italian war in defense of Libya, Arabism, and Islam. [passage omitted]

Brothers, the world is now hearing the voice of this town, which we have just described to it. I tell them once again: We do not challenge you. Al-Qadhdhafi does not challenge you with huge armies or naval fleets like your fleets, but he challenges with these masses that have written their history in the past and that are ready to write their future history. Al-Qadhdhafi challenges you with these roaring masses, these masses that will not be deterred by siege, embargo, terrorism, intimidation, or threats.

This town has become accustomed to battling with the West European invaders. This town, which is over 700-years-old, has been accustomed to seeing that nothing but evil comes from the West and from Europe. Nothing comes from them except threats. Since when has Europe been a bringer of glad tidings? In fact, it was a bringer of doom. Since when has the West been a bringer of the tidings of peace? Indeed, it has always called for war.

Today, they brag about democracy and civilization. They brag about human rights. They are barbarians and savages and as far away as they can be from humanity, about whose rights they are talking. The most avowed enemy of man is the NATO camp—the capitalist and colonialist camp. It is this camp that destroyed the world with two world wars. They are responsible for the death of 30 million human beings—unjustly and aggressively. Most of them were women, children, old people, and defenseless people.

They have become accustomed since World War I and II to hearing the voice of the submissive ones, the voice of the defeatist agents. They never want to hear any voice except the voice of the hireling governments that they imposed on the Third World after World War I and II. [passage omitted]

They are the greatest enemies of democracy, and they are the greatest enemies of humanity. They are war criminals who should be tried for killing 30 million innocent people in World War II. Who killed these millions? They were killed by Berlin, Paris, Washington, London, Rome, and Tokyo. All these capitals are criminals and are responsible for exterminating the human race. They are the ones who made the deadly weapons of mass destruction. They made them not for hunting rabbits or gazelles, birds or fish. They made nuclear weapons in order to mow down the human race. [passage omitted]

Why, brothers, do they impose a ban on the sale of arms to Libya? This is because they want to disarm the Libyan people and strip them of the weapons with which they can defend themselves. What does this mean? It means that they want to attack and annihilate the Libyan people and to colonize the land of the Libyan people. This is totally clear. When they impose a ban on the arming of a state—on enabling a people to own weapons—this means, brothers, that they are preparing for an attack on this people and to occupy its land. We knew that when they imposed the ban on the Libyan people's purchasing or manufacturing of weapons that this clearly meant that they wanted to attack the Libyan people. [passage omitted]

We are awaiting them; the fish await them too! The fish are awaiting the fair soft flesh—American, British, French, and European flesh. The fish of the Mediterranean, brothers, are in dire need of the flesh of the Europeans! They are eager to taste their flesh, especially after having tasted it in 1986, when they tasted the flesh of the American pilots! [passage omitted]

How regretful one should be over a nation that has handed over its fate, affairs, and the future of its generations to traitorous lackeys! [passage omitted]

O Arab people, listen to the voice of the Libyan people who are standing along the confrontation line, who are standing at this historic fortress along the shores of the Mediterranean—beating back invasion after invasion and defeating campaign after campaign. They are now getting ready with high morale and with a definite resolve to ensure that colonialism will never triumph, to make sure that colonialism will never set foot on the free land of Libya. O people hear this, the voice of the master people. [passage omitted]

Brothers, this is not a challenge from Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi that is being thrown out in an air-conditioned

salon or in a false office. This is the challenge of the masses in a square under the sun. [passage omitted]

By God, America, Britain, and France need to hear what is going on these days in Libya so that they can rectify their incorrect calculations. They used to believe that Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is an individual who is challenging them. Today, however, they must have inevitably realized—if they have listening ears—that the challenge is not that of Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. It is the challenge of the masses, the masses who have come out into the squares and are ready for the confrontation. This is the challenge that frightens the Western states. [passage omitted]

Listen to the voice of the town of 1,000 martyrs. Italy knows this. That was why Italy advised the West and advised America, Britain, and France, because Italy knows what the Libyan people are like! Italy knows that al-Zawiyah alone offered 1000 martyrs in battles from Rigdan to al-Qardhabiyyah.

Britain, France, and America, as well as Scandinavia and the Benelux countries, have not yet seen the records and the bravery of the Libyan people. They do not know al-Zawiyah. They do not know the town of the 1,000 martyrs. We tell these countries today: You have an opportunity before you to protect yourselves. In order to avoid sustaining a new Vietnamese or Somalian defeat, you should acquaint yourselves with the records of the Libyan jihad against the Italians so that you may know that a town such as al-Zawiyah offered 1,000 martyrs. [passage omitted]

They should read the history of the European campaigns, and how the latter used to fear al-Zawiyah, and how they tried to avoid clashes with al-Zawiyah, this fortress whose time has come back once again. Once again we challenge them with it. We are here along the shores of the Mediterranean in confrontation with the West and Europe. We are here along the first line of defense, the defense of the Arab nation, Islam, and Africa. We are here at the historic fortress, the vanguard fortress. We are here at the western corner. Let the world hear the voice of the masses. I have nothing with which I can challenge America, Britain, and France except the voice of the masses and their preparedness and resolve to fight the enemies. This is a Great Jamahiriyah wedding, preparedness for confrontation. It is the wedding of defiance. [passage omitted]

If they want peace, then we wave an olive branch to them. But if they insist on being hostile to us, then we welcome this enmity. We will know after this that we have nothing between us and the imperialist Christian West—in the light of its barbaric black history—except enmity and hatred.

The peoples of the Arab nation should know, and the free Libyan people should know first of all, that the West does not have any regard for you. The West is colonialist and barbaric by nature. The history of the West is a history of successive attacks on your countries—a history of the persecution, destruction, and extermination of your sons. You must not let them to have the upper hand over you again.

People of the Arab nation, listen to the voice of the people who have been saved, the voice of the people who have become free by the revolution. The voice of the master people calls you, people of the Arab nation. They are beating the drums of confrontation because they have begun to beat the drums of the crusaders war.

Brothers, we have exhausted our patience. I say it once again. We have tried for two or three years to argue with them peacefully, and we were waving the olive branch. We accepted mediation. We agreed to all the mediation. We said to them: We want peace. We want friendship and cooperation. We want the relationship between you and us be a relationship of friendship, mutual respect, and mutual benefit. We said to them: Forget the arrogance of colonialism. Forget the colonialist past. Forget the life you lived at the expense of others. We said to them that the Libyan people are a courageous people and a good people at the same time. They are a peaceful people who want freedom for themselves and for all of mankind. The Libyan people want to cooperate with you in a beneficial way. We sent delegations and written messages, and we accepted middlemen from all of them.

What was France's reply after agreeing to the start of an investigation. They sent us a judge in a frigate equipped with Exocet missiles, surface-to-air missiles, surface-to-surface missiles, and depth charges. [passage omitted]

They are dreaming of the year 1830. They are dreaming of the days when we used to be defenseless, ignorant, and backward. Look at France's reply. It sent a judge in a frigate to investigate. [passage omitted]

Is this the reply of a balanced state? Is this the reply of friendship? Is this the reply of a civilized state or a state that wants friendship with the Arab Maghreb? This is a colonialist state that dreams of dominating the Arab Maghreb once again.

What was the reply of America? It was to give orders to the UN Security Council to increase the sanctions against the Libyan people, who are calling for peace, friendship, and a peaceful solution to the problem. Will America be gaining from this escalation? We say to it: No, and 1,000 times no. America will not gain from this escalation against the Libyan people. Let the White House hear this. [passage omitted]

When Clinton came to power, we said that we are friends of those who befriend us, and we antagonize those who antagonize us. You have seen how we antagonized Reagan and how we defeated him because he antagonized us. And you are welcome as a friend—a bright star in the darkness of America. There is no animosity between us and the Democrat administration, and there is no personal hatred against the person of Clinton.

Indeed, we said that Clinton was anti-war, and he used to lead demonstrations in Britain against the Vietnam war. [passage omitted]

We told him we are not like the rest of the Arabs. We are not like the rest of the Third World, who befriend you because you give them economic aid or befriend because you protect them militarily. We do not want economic aid or military protection from you. We want a friendship of equals: mutual benefits based on mutual respect between the great Libyan people and the American people. We do not recognize a god on earth. We do not recognize that the large number or the great wealth or the great possession of iron and timber make one people more sacred than others or more human than others.

They looked at us as if we were a herd of animals but their sons are humans. We still say to Clinton: We are still standing by our promise. We befriend those who befriend us. If you want to befriend us, we are your friends. We are friends in the strict meaning of the word friend. They do not know anyone else other than agents. We are friends of any force on the face of the globe if it respects us and treats us as equals.

They continued to put pressure on poor Clinton, portraying him as a weak president and obliging him to follow the life of Bush and Reagan and to spend his life as vice president. Yes, the colonial, imperialist circles in America were the ones to mislead Clinton—the good man, the man of peace, the man that holds no hatred for anyone and to whom no one carries any hatred. They misled him and made him fall into potholes and traps. They made him strike Baghdad before the decision on Kuwait was made. This was a matter for laughter. It was ridiculous. The Arab nation ought to have protested against this act, but most regrettably it bowed its head.

They misled him into supporting the shelling of the Russian parliament with tanks: a democratic state applauding the shelling of a parliament with tanks. What democracy is this? I, for one, find it surprising that the Russian people should go to the polls once again and form a new parliament, because tanks will come in and shell it when this parliament falls out with the president. Therefore, why should the Russian people go to the ballot boxes? It is a sham democracy that has been completely exposed by the Green Book. There is no democracy other than that where all the people rule. There is no democracy without people's congresses. Congresses and committees must be everywhere.

They have misled him, but he might overcome the vile and hidden circles of evil and conspiracy inside and outside the White House. He might overcome this. If he is a friend, then we will befriend him. If he is an enemy, then we will have enmity for him, whoever he might be. Let this be clear.

As for Britain—which has been exposed before the world and has become the laughingstock of the 20th century, or rather the laughing stock of the 21st century and thereafter—look at Britain! Where is the credibility of Britain, where is majesty [al-a'zthama]. Oh you, her majesty's government, where is civility when you are holding secret negotiations with the leaders of the IRA while declaring before the world that there are no negotiations with and no recognition of terrorists.

You used to say that Libya is a terrorist state. Why? Because it had secret contacts with the leaders of the IRA. What can we say now, what can the world say and what will history say about this scandal [previous word in English], a scandal before the world. Oh you, her majesty's government. It has now become clear that contacts may be made with the IRA, that negotiations may be held with it, and that it does have a cause.

Now we say that it is thanks to the Libyan people that this cause is now victorious—which is more than 300 years old. Now they have announced a declaration of principles to the effect that Ireland has the right to unity, that Britain is a colonial power, and that it must get out of Northern Ireland. This is precisely what the First of September said 25 years ago, and it has been fighting for it with words and weapons. [sentence as heard]

Who was right and who was wrong? They protest if Libya openly meets the IRA, but who can protest now? Thanks be to God, they will not be able to do so. Look at the gangs; look at the savagery and barbarism. Look at the mighty governments holding secret meetings with those whom they used to call terrorists.

Quite recently, they used to say that Yasir 'Arafat was a terrorist heading a terrorist organization. Now he is a being received in America, Britain, France, and Germany. Why? Because he has recognized what is called Israel. Therefore, the point at issue is not that of terrorism or no terrorism; it is a matter of interests: They recognize he who meets their interests. If this is so, then Libya too behaves in accordance with its own interests, and the Arab nation must behave in accordance with its own interests. The interests of the Arab nation and the interests of the Libyan people are the ones that dictate to the Libyan people. Meet this one, and do not meet that one. Help this one, and do not help that one. Stand by the side of this one, and stand against this one.

Yes, our interests require that we should meet with Abu Nidal, Abu al-Abbas, Ahmad Jibril, Abu-Musa, and all leaders of the Palestinian people and the leaders of the real Palestinian resistance. This is in the interest of the Arab nation, in the interest of the cause of the Arab nation's freedom. We have to unite our ranks as Arab fighters. We have to unite our ranks and challenge the enemy. It is a question of liberating an occupied Arab land. Nobody can prevent us from meeting with Abu Nidal or anyone else. We know the terrorists; our ethics, cause, and revolutionary principles do not allow us to meet them, people like Carlos. He is a terrorist. The drug smugglers in America—drug smuggling is a dirty profession. Our principles and revolution as well as our ethics and values do not allow us to meet with them.

As for the freedom-fighters, we are the ones whom they turn to and we are their natural ally. We are worthy of meeting them—from Ireland to the Philippines, to anywhere else. We are the ones who realized peace in the Philippines. The American bases prevented peace there; they conspired against the Philippines. When these bases were closed, peace was realized among the sons of the Philippines, from north to south. Libya played the effective role in the realization of peace in the Philippines.

Brothers, we told them that Lockerbie, from our viewpoint meant two things. We have detailed these things according to our own analysis. Locker A and Locker B—we do not know Lockerbie. We called it Locker, and this Locker is made up of A and B. A was the attack on Libya in 1986; that was Locker A. Children were killed; women were killed; houses were destroyed with innocent families inside; they were asleep. Locker B was the crash of the Pan Am airliner in Scotland. We cannot deal with the Locker B issue without dealing with the Locker A issue. Yes; Locker A and B. We tell the Security Council—and challenge it to prove that it actually represents the United Nations and is not a tool in the hands of the three Western states. You have to look into the case of Locker in both its parts, A and B; Locker A and Locker B.

Who killed the children in 1986? What did our people do to be attacked by 170 aircraft from the two strongest states on this globe—America and Britain—the cowardly attack during the last part of night on sleeping children? Who was responsible for that massacre, the victims of which were our children? Were our children cattle and your's human beings? No, and 1,000 no's. Our children are human beings. They look at their children in Lockerbie, Scotland, and in the Pan Am as human beings, and our children as sheep. They cry over the crash of the Pan Am airliner and forget the 1986 massacre. [passage omitted] Let the Security Council look into Locker A and Locker B. Yes.

O brothers, when they set conditions that the trial must take place in America and Britain, don't they know that this insults and degrades all countries of the world and walks over the laws of all countries in the world. That means that there is no justice except in America and Britain. There is no justice in Europe, in Latin America, Africa, Arab countries or in Asia. They say that justice only exists in America and Britain. This is the ultimate insult to every country on the face of the earth.

We refuse to accept this and we tell them: Justice is not in America or Britain. They say to hell with justice in any other country with the exception of America, Britain, and France; legal evidence proves it.

America, Britain, and France, from the point of view of international law, do not have the right to participate in the Security Council and take a vote on any decision concerning its dispute with Libya because they are opponents, and possess the right of veto. So voting in the Security Council would be null and void from the start. International law and international legitimacy do not allow America, Britain, and France to take part in voting in the dispute or the confrontation between them and the Libyan people. They are opponents, and it is not permissible for an opponent to become a member in the panel of judges. Moreover, an opponent cannot be a judge. But they have appointed themselves judges.

If the 1986 Locker A case was brought to trial, America, Britain, and France would not be not permitted to take part in the voting because their participation is null and void. If the Locker B case was brought to trial, it will not be permissible for them to take part in the voting because their participation is null and void.

We tell our brothers, the rulers of the Arab nation: Shame on you, shame on you, return to your senses, listen to your people. How can you implement a decision, an invalid decision, one that an opponent has passed on your brother?

O world, that was not a Security Council resolution. If the Security Council issued a resolution on Libya's innocence, America, Britain, or France would use the veto against it. When the 1986 case was put forward—that unjustified massacre which was put to the Security Council—America, Britain, and France immediately vetoed it. Then why was it [Lockerbie case] put forward if the opponent is the judge. These countries do not have the right to participate in a case involving them. They can take part in other cases to which they are not a party.

Any legitimacy to a resolution issued by the opponents...[pauses] O rulers of the Arab nation, O you who prevent your sons from coming to Libya by air, and prevent your brothers from going over to you by air, what international legitimacy is this that is set by the occupation. What would you say, dear and respected rulers of the Arab nation, if the Security Council—which is America, Britain, and France in actual fact—decided to wage war against Libya in line with Chapter Seven [of the UN Charter] and asked you, per Chapter Seven, to participate in this war. Would you say no? If you said no, then you would be opposing the Security Council, the United Nations, international legitimacy, Chapter Seven, and the UN Charter. That is your excuse now for your country's blockade of Libya. Then the Security Council would carry out against you what it is implementing against Libya, besause you refused to apply Chapter Seven. So, either you take part in the war—a war of tanks, planes and artillery—on the orders of the enemy against your family and people in Libya...[sentence as heard]

This is Chapter Seven. O rulers of the Arab nation, that is the result of Chapter Seven. We are puzzled how the rulers of the Arab nation do not allow the voice of the masses to be heard. The opinions of the Arab people are with you, but they are helpless. [Al-Qadhdhafi speaks to a man standing near him] Get the list.

As we have said, all the international organizations—the Non-Aligned Movement, the OAU, the Islamic Conference Organization, which between them constitute more

than two-thirds of the UN General Assembly—supported Libya. Therefore Libya is being supported by all nations. These nations appreciate Libya's stance and its wise policy, which protects peace; the rational policy which does not compromise human rights. [passage omitted] Neither America, nor Britain, nor France heard these voices.

As for the Arab level, on the second day of this month all Egyptian political parties, trade unions and popular organizations met and ridiculed the resolutions of what is falsely termed as the Security Council, and supported the just cause of the Libyan people with all their means. America, Britain, and France did not listen to the voice of the Egyptian political forces; they disregarded them. [passage omitted]

On the 11th day of this month all parties and liberation and revolutionary movements, all federations and popular trade unions—Syrian, Palestinian, and Lebanese—met in Syria and declared their rejection of all the unjust resolutions against the Libyan people, and announced that they stand by the Libyan people's just cause. America, Britain, France, and the so-called Security Council did not listen to them. They disregarded them.

They still lie and say that Libya is against the international community. Who is being isolated? The three states are isolated from the rest of the world. On the 11th day of this month the Algerian political parties staged a rally in Constantine to the same effect—rejecting these resolutions and expressing support for the Libyan people. [passage omitted]

The sons of your Arab nation are with you, but not the governments. The poor Arab governments are now in a critical position for economic, political, and military reasons, as well as for tribal and sectarian reasons; they are in an unenviable position. [passage omitted] The masses will triumph; the people will be the ones who will triumph in the battle. America, Britain, and France are rapidly taking the world down the slippery slope toward a clash with the masses. This is not a clash with the Libyan army, nor with Libyan aircraft, nor with Libyan ships, nor is it a clash with a government or a president who may even sell his people and his honor—it is a direct clash with those who stand on the land of their fathers and forefathers. [passage omitted]

The West dreamed that this country would be a tasty morsel, but they have now injured the dignity of the master people; they have injured the loftiness of the Libyan people; they have insulted the independence of the Libyan people. With total insolence they demanded from the Libyan people that they hand over its sons to stand trial in America and Britain. [passage omitted] When they dared to insult the Libyan people the latter, as usual, rose up. Now the Libyan people have risen up and declare: To hell with the oil, and to hell with the Western goods, and to hell with the Western companies, and to hell even with peace with the West! To hell with friendship with the West! The matter has reached the extent of handing over our sons to the enemy. Are we then supposed to hand over our daughters and wives? How dare the West do such a thing! We demand that Reagan and Thatcher—the two criminals—be handed over to us. They are war criminals. They have openly murdered. We demand the heads of Reagan and Thatcher, the murderers. Bring them here to stand trial before the Libyan courts and let them defend themselves. [passage omitted]

Each one of you is being asked to hand over your wife, daughter, sister, and mother—to be handed over to Scotland. Yes, if you hand over your sons, then in the new year you will be handing over your wives, sisters, and daughters. This is because they believe that those who are suspected are the sons of al-Qadhdhafi and they say that al-Qadhdhafi is preventing them being handed over. [passage omitted] This is a flgarnat violation of the Montreal Agreement. It is a flagrant violation of the UN Charter. We insist on the Montreal Agreement. [passage omitted]

Brothers, let them be prepared to fight the Libyan people for at least 100 years. Generations and generations; we are ready to resist. Let them prepare to fight the Libyan people for 100 years. We have enough weapons for 100 years. Let the Western states hear this! We have 1 or 2 million weapon-trained people; not only with guns; all medium and heavy weapons. We can turn the Mediterranean into a sea of red. Nevertheless, the door is open and we still wave an olive branch. [passage omitted]

Bush described the Koran as being the laws of Hammourabi. He said so in Saudi Arabia. He said that Hammourabi had said: By the token of time, verily man is in loss; except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and join together in the mutual teaching of truth. Bush said these words. The rulers of Saudi Arabia] all bowed their heads; those who call themselves Muslims! The cowards! The hypocrites! They did not protest against their master, their guardian, the provider of their livelihood and their protector—Bush.

This is what the Koran tells us: Be patient. We are patient when we confront the enemies. We the Libyan people are proud of living the life which the honorable people deserve. [passage omitted] We are waiting for them; the fish are waiting for them too!

Al-Qadhdhafi Said 'Neutral' to Peace Process

TA1712142993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Dec 93 p A6

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Gay Bekhor]

[Excerpts] Libyan ruler al-Qadhdhafi last Saturday [11 December] told the Jewish-Italian businessman Rafaelo Fellah he is not opposed to Middle East peace. According to Fellah, however, "al-Qadhdhafi believes that the Rabin-'Arafat agreement is not good for the Palestinians and the Jews."

Fellah, who came to Israel to attend the fourth convention of the World Organization of Jews From Arab Countries, yesterday said he held a "warm" 90-minute meeting with the Libyan leader in Tripoli last Saturday.

During the meeting al-Qadhdhafi said he regards himself as neutral in everything relating to recent Israel-PLO peace efforts.

Al-Qadhdhafi told Fellah he indirectly supported the Madrid conference and the ensuing bilateral and multilateral talks through a representative of the Arab Maghreb Union who attended the conference. Libya is a member of this union.

Al-Qadhdhafi added, however, that he opposes secret agreements and prefers to wait and see how the Oslo agreement progresses.

Asked whether these remarks serve as a message from al-Qadhdhafi to Israel, Fellah said it is a message to everybody who is ready to listen. Fellah noted: "Al-Qadhdhafi is neutral in everything relating to the agreement with Israel, and this is an important point."

The meeting with al-Qadhdhafi was also attended by Giulio Andreotti, Italian Parliament member and former foreign minister. Andreotti is scheduled to arrive in Israel in January, and will hold talks with Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres. "Perhaps Andreotti will bring a message from al-Qadhdhafi to Israel," Fellah said.

Fellah was one of the organizers of the Libyan pilgrimage to Israel several months ago. Yesterday he said that had the Libyan pilgrims been received in a positive way, everything would have turned differently. According to him, al-Qadhdhafi closely monitored the visit of the pilgrims to Israel. [passage omitted]

Referring to the Lockerbie crisis, Fellah says there is no change in al-Qadhdhafi's position. The Libyan leader is willing to hand over the two Lockerbie suspects for trial to any country except the United States and Britain.

The United States and Britain, however, insist they be extradited to one of them. Fellah quoted al-Qadhdhafi as saying last Saturday: "I am willing to compromise, but this must be a compromise of honor."

Al-Qadhdhafi said he is willing to meet senior UN officials in Tripoli "without any prejudice," in order to reach an understanding with them.

Fellah said: "In the meeting, al-Qadhdhafi asked why the Americans are exonerating al-Asad, the greatest terrorist, rather than himself." Al-Qadhdhafi also expressed anger that Somalia's General Aidid has received the red carpet treatment, whereas he is still being ostracized. Fellah added: "One must understand how al-Qadhdhafi thinks."

As will be recalled, the Security Council recently exacerbated the sanctions against Libya due to al-Qadhdhafi's refusal to extradite the Lockerbie suspects. Fellah notes, however, that the economic situation in Tripoli does not seem to have deteriorated: "This is a rich country with a small population, so the effects of the sanctions are merely psychological."

According to Fellah al-Qadhdhafi is also angry about claims regarding Libyan patronage of terror organizations. Al-Qadhdhafi claims that he has terminated aid to Libyan sponsored terror organizations and has even relayed information on them to Western countries. He added that he has given Britain a lot of information regarding the Irish underground, but has received nothing in return. [passage omitted]

Iranian Foreign Minister Meets Durdah

NC1812074693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Yesterday's meeting between Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati and Libyan Prime Minister [title as heard] Abu-Zayd 'Umar Durdah in Tripoli stressed the need for broadening cooperation between the two countries in the political, economic, industrial, scientific, and cultural fields.

During this meeting, the Libyan prime minister referred to the plots by the powers of world arrogance against the Islamic world, from Central Asia and the Balkans to East Asia. He said that the enemy wants to sow discord in the Islamic world in order to attain its objectives. Thus, the Islamic countries should muster all their resources and show solidarity and understanding to eliminate these problems.

Abu-Zayd 'Umar Durdah deemed the meetings between some heads of Western countries and the apostate Salman Rushdie as an insult to Islam and Muslims and evidence of the animosity of the powers of world arrogance against Islam.

In response, Foreign Minister Velayati said that Islam is the common factor of strength among the Muslim countries and emphasized the need for solidarity of the Islamic world against the common enemy. Referring to the importance of regional cooperation, Dr. Velayati declared our country's willingness for greater cooperation with Islamic countries.

Dr. Velayati and his accompanying delegation visited the site of the mammoth project for supplying water in the city of (al-Sanayah) in Libya and inspected the various aspects of the implementation, production, construction, and transport of massive water-supply lines. This project, which has come to be known as the river of life, is the largest one for transporting subterranean water from the Libyan deserts to the coastal cities by using pipelines.

Ends Visit, Departs

LD1812190593 Tripoli JANA in English 1836 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Kanun [December] 18, Jamahiryah News Agency—'Ali Akbar Velayati, the foreign minister of Iran, this afternoon left Tripoli after a visit to the Great Jamahiryah and he was seen off by the secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation.

Opposition Leader al-Kikhya Reportedly in Libya

Wife Sends Letters to Mubarak, Clinton

JN1712164793 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] In its international edition today, the [London-based] newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT cites the wife of Libyan opposition figure Mansur al-Kikhya, who disappeared in Cairo last Saturday, as saying that her husband is now in Libya. Al-Kikhya's wife, who carries a U.S. passport, said she is awaiting President Husni Mubarak's reply to a letter she addressed to him earlier this week, appealing for his intervention to save her husband's life.

[Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic on 15 December publishes on pages 1 and 34 a 250-word report from its London office citing al-Kikhya's wife, "Baha al-'Umari Kikhya," as saying that Egyptian officials had informed her that "based on investigations, her husband had not left Egypt." She also told the paper that she had sent a letter to President Clinton requesting his "personal intervention to find her husband"]

Brother Assures Relatives

NC1812164793 Paris AFP in English 1451 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, Dec 18 (AFP)—The Libyan opposition in Egypt said Saturday it was "convinced" that one of its leaders, Mansur al-Kikhya, who went missing in Cairo last Saturday [11 December], had been kidnapped by agents of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Muhammad Jibril, Cairo spokesman for the opposition Libyan National Salvation Front, told AFP that on Thursday the front managed to contact al-Kikhya's brother Mahmud, who lives in Benghazi, in northeastern Libya.

"Mahmud al-Kikhya said a Libyan official had assured (Mansur) al-Kikhya's relatives that Mansur was in Libya, but did not say whether Mansur's family had managed to meet him, or whether the Libyan dissident went to Libya willingly," Jibril said.

"The Libyan opposition is convinced Mansur al-Kikhya was kidnapped by agents" of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, Jibril said.

Al-Kikhya, 63, formerly Libyan foreign minister from 1972 to 1975, and representative at the United Nations from 1976 to 1980, was in Cairo for a congress of the Arab Organization of Human Rights.

Normally resident in Paris, al-Kikhya is Secretary General of another Libyan opposition movement, the National Rally.

He disappeared after leaving his hotel last Saturday.

Jibril said that a few minutes after al-Kikhya left the hotel "an unidentified caller told the reception desk al-Kikhya had gone to Alexandria and would return to the hotel in 24 hours."

"But al-Kikhya's departure for Alexandria was illogical, since he had just visited the city and had an appointment at the hotel Saturday with his brother Mustafa," Jibril said, adding that the telephone call was intended as a diversion.

He said al-Qadhdhafi would hold al-Kikhya hostage in a bid to dissuade the opposition from pursuing its struggle against the Libyan government.

Al-Kikhya had been "targeted" by the Libyan authorities since his meeting in Algiers on October 14 with Libyan National Salvation Front leader Muhammad al-Muqayrif, Jibril said.

"The leaders of the two main Libyan opposition movements signed an accord to join ranks, which triggered al-Qadhdhafi's fears," he said.

On Friday, U.S. State Department spokesman Michael McCurry expressed the United States' concern about the dissident's disappearance.

"We've been in touch with the Government of Egypt, urged them to make every effort they can to find out what happened," he said.

The United Nations also expressed concern for al-Kikhya's safety on Friday. U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali has contacted the Egyptian Government and urged an investigation, a spokesman said.

Al-Kikhya's wife, Baha' al-Kikhya, who lives in France, said a member of her husband's family told her on Wednesday by phone from Tripoli that her husband was now in Libya, according to a statement published by the Saudi daily AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT.

Sudan

Wife of Former Premier al-Mahdi Interrogated

PM2012095193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "Sudanese Security Authorities Interrogate al-Mahdi's Wife"]

[Excerpt] London—Opposition Sudanese Ummah Party sources have said that Sudanese security authorities detained Mrs. Sarah al-Fadil al-Mahdi, wife of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, former prime minister and leader of the Ummah party, and interrogated her for over 10 hours.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that a number of security officers successively interrogated Mrs. al-Fadil at the security organ's headquarters in Khartoum. The sources pointed out that most of the questions during the interrogation focused on a study prepared recently by the Ummah Party on the issue of self-determination in southern Sudan. Mrs. al-Fadil was released after the interrogation.

Sudanese security organs obtained a copy of this study recently when they arrested al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's driver and confiscated his car.

It is worth mentioning that Mrs. Sarah al-Fadil is a leading Ummah Party figure and has been arrested and interrogated several times before.

Ummah Party officials say that security authorities have recently arrested three prominent members of the party. They are lawyers 'Abd-al-Mahmud Hajj Salih, a former prosecutor general; 'Abd-al-Wahhab Sha'rani; and Adam Qurayqir. [passage omitted]

Government Reports Conflicts in Rebel Movement

AB1912202193 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Sources in Nairobi have disclosed the exacerbation of conflicts inside the rebel movement. They pointed out that elements from the rebel Garang faction have made several attempts to assassinate William Nyuon, the former second deputy to Garang, within the framework of the Garang faction's attempt to liquidate foes among the leadership. In a press statement published by the newspaper AL-INQADH AL-WATANI today, the sources ruled out the possibility of the real unification of the rebel factions, because the Washington Agreement was no more than a cover up of exacerbated racial and tribal struggles inside the different wings of the rebel movement, as well as to personal differences between Garang and his aides.

The sources said that the rebel Garang was engaged in selling relief supplies he was collecting from different organizations in Uganda. He was also using the movement's funds for his personal use as he and his wife sign checks and employ all the movement's resources and potential for his own life of luxury and for those close to him from his tribe. The sources said that the Garang faction attacked the Unified Faction last month in the Gora area and arrested a number of people from Jibal al-Nubah.

Earlier Garang and Riak Machar agreed to a cease-fire between themselves. However, the two sides then accused one another and fighting resumed between them, thus confirming the depth of the tribal differences.

Police To Cooperate With Security Bodies

EA1912185393 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Vice President Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih yesterday addressed the final session of the police commanders' conference. He praised the role of the police in all fields, particularly in combating crime and armed robberies. Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih stressed the interest of the revolution in the police forces to enable them to discharge their duties in society in the best manner. His excellency promised that the resolutions and recommendations issued by the conference would be adopted.

In its recommendations, the conference stressed police commitment to work in the south of the country to serve the cause of peace and the commitment of the police to respect the rights guaranteed by law for the citizens and those charged with crimes. The conference also recommended the strengthening of relations between police forces and those of general security in the higher interests of the country. The recommendations also covered the fields of developing and organizing manpower and combating smuggling and narcotics.

Kuwait

Iraqi Border Demarcation Agreement Reached

LD1712210693 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1751 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 17 Dec (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry under secretary Sulayman Shahin today stressed that there had been no Kuwaiti concessions during the demarcation of the borders with Iraq, but that there had been "cooperation from Kuwait and all parties concerned so that this operation could be completed."

In a statement to KUNA, Shahin commented on today's press reports quoting him as saying that "Kuwait had made geographical concessions at the request of the United Nations during the demarcation of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi borders."

He explained that during the meetings of the technical committee, which was charged with demarcating the borders, there had been certain fundamental points in this demarcation, of which the most important with regard to the land borders was the point of Safwan.

He said that in this regard there were two views or opinions. According to the first, the borders between the two countries were fixed at a distance of 1,650 meters south of Safwan, while according to the second, the borders were 1,000 meters away, as shown on Kuwaiti maps. But the international committee had chosen a median point approximately 1,430 meters south of Safwan.

Shahin indicated that Kuwait had officially expressed reservations about this, which meant a 430-meter encroachment into Kuwaiti territory along the border strip. Despite this, Kuwait accepted this result because of its desire for the demarcation of the borders to be successfully implemented.

The Foreign Ministry official pointed out that an Iraqi representative had attended and participated in the meetings of the committee. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister: No Peace With Saddam in Power

LD1812122693 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0841 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 18 Dec—Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, stressed today that the Gulf region will not experience calm, stability, or peace as long as Saddam Husayn and his regime remained in power.

In an interview with the deputy editor of the Saudi AL-JAZIRAH, Muhammad al-Wasil, the heir apparent, said: "One must recognize, whatever system he has, the sovereignty of the State of Kuwait and its borders, which are internationally recognized according to the documents and agreements concluded between the two countries, and abandon his aggressive policy toward Kuwait."

Shaykh Sa'd defined the priorities of Kuwait by saying: "We have to put our house back in order, build our country, treat the wounds of our people, strengthen our security, and revive our economy."

He stressed the importance of reviewing the accounts and reassessing stances and policies, and expressed his hope that the Riyadh summit would underpin joint Gulf action to face up to the perils and challenges around us. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

BCCI Shareholders File Suit Against Executives

NC2012080193 Paris AFP in English 0755 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec 20 (AFP)—The majority shareholders of the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) on Monday filed a civil law suit against its former executives for damages of nine billion dollars.

The Abu Dhabi ruling family and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) filed in court here against the Pakistani founder of BCCI, Agha Hassan Abedi, and 12 other former executives, the shareholders said.

"The civil claimants, who were the majority shareholders of BCCI when it was shut down in July 1991, are seeking nine billion dollars in damages for mismanaged and stolen funds," they said in a statement.

Yemen

Prime Minister Stopped by Soldiers Outside Sanaa

NC1812071393 Paris AFP in English 0245 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Aden, Yemen, Dec 18 (AFP)—Yemeni Prime Minister Haydar al-'Attas, a senior southern politician was briefly held up by soldiers on Friday [17 December] as he was about to enter the capital for talks aimed at resolving a four month-old crisis between the formerly separate north and south.

In a communique issued in Aden, the capital of formerly communist South Yemen, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) of which al-'Attas is a senior member said his convoy had been stopped just outside Sanaa by armed soldiers.

Al-'Attas and his aides, who were on their way back from Aden, were only allowed to pursue their journey after much discussion with officials in the capital, the YSP said.

Differences over policy between the YSP led by Vice-President 'Ali Salim al-Bid, a southerner, and the General People's Congress of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih have plunged Yemen into its worst crisis since the north and south were reunited in 1990.

Talks between the two sides are due to resume on Saturday in Sanaa. The talks were broken off on December 4 after the YSP suggesting turning Yemen into a federation.

Political Forces Order Investigation

JN1812210593 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Political forces held a dialogue at the Prime Ministry this morning. The meeting discussed the current political crisis and ways of finding the right solution to it. Following a lengthy discussion and a review of various opinions, the meeting agreed to consider the proposed points that deal with the crisis within the framework of the following four axes: Restoring and strengthening confidence, issues pertaining to building a modern Yemeni state, economic issues, and a mechanism for implementing what is to be agreed upon.

The secretariat of the meeting was asked to sort out and present the topics for discussion during the meeting the political forces will hold the day after tomorrow, Monday [20 December]. The meeting also reviewed what had been done to stop the repercussions of the crisis in both the media and security areas.

A statement was issued by the political parties. Following is the text: Participants in the dialogue acquainted themselves with the incident that had happened to the prime minister's convoy at the entrance to the capital, Sanaa, at noon yesterday, Friday, 17 December 1993, in which the military police behaved in a provocative way.

In light of the incident, the political forces' meeting registered its deep thanks to and appreciation for the brother prime minister for his wisdom and his highly responsible behavior. The meeting also expressed its regret about and condemnation of that irresponsible behavior and urged the government to take resolute measures to prevent such behaviors everywhere and provide the political parties with the results of the current investigation.

The Yemeni news agency, SABA', has learned from a responsible source at the Defense and Security Affairs Ministry that Prime Minister brother Engineer Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas issued instructions last night that a Defense and Security Affairs Ministry Committee, including brother Colonel 'Ali Muhammad Salah, deputy chief of the General Staff, and Colonel 'Ali Naji, director of the Defense and Security Affairs Minister's office, be formed to conduct speedy investigation of the incident and to submit a report on it so that legal measures can be taken.

Cabinet Orders Investigation

JN1912142693 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The Council of Ministers met this morning under Prime Minister brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas. The Council examined the circumstances surrounding the regrettable incident on Friday, in which the brother prime minister's motorcade was stopped at an entrance to the capital by some military police crews who behaved irresponsibly. The Council adopted measures to follow up on the investigation of this incident.

The Council of Ministers also reviewed a report submitted by the brother foreign minister on his recent visit to the fraternal State of Qatar. The Council was also briefed on a report submitted by the brother planning and development minister on his participation in the 18th annual conference of the Islamic Bank's Board of Governors held in Banjul, the Republic of Gambia, on 2-3 November. It was also apprised of another report submitted by the same minister on a visit he paid to Japan on 8-13 November. The Council was also briefed on a report submitted by the brother minister of social security and social affairs on a visit he paid to the fraternal Republic of Iraq on 17-27 November.

The Council of Ministers expressed its condolences to Culture and Tourism Minister brother Jarallah 'Umar on the demise of his mother, who passed away yesterday. The Council entreated Almighty God to envelop her with his encompassing mercy and forgiveness, and to bestow patience and solace on her relatives and kinsfolk. We are God's creatures, and to him we return.

Presidential Council Member Thanks Qatari Envoy

JN1912144693 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Presidential Council member Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani today received brother Muhammad al-Ansari, ambassador of the fraternal State of Qatar in Sanaa.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral ties and the means of promoting them. They also reviewed the most recent Arab and Islamic developments.

The brother Presidential Council member expressed his own as well as the Yemeni people's gratitude to the fraternal State of Qatar—government and people—for their support for Yemen and its unity. He said Yemeni unity is a factor of stability in the region.

For his part, the ambassador underscored the strength of the fraternal ties between the Yemeni and Qatari peoples. He added that he looks forward to seeing these ties expanded in the interest of the two countries. He expressed the hope that the current political crisis will be resolved to promote Yemeni unity, which is an accomplishment that will work to the advantage of Arabs and Muslims alike.

'Permitted' Imports Said Diverted to Ports

JN1912122393 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 19 Dec 93 pp 1, 24

[By Nayif al-Muhaysin]

[Excerpt] Iraq has decided to divert its imports of materials permitted by the United Nations for both the public and private sectors to its ports in the Arabian Gulf. The decision, circulated by the federation of Iraqi chambers of commerce, said that importers will be given facilities at Iraqi ports, including exempting the freighters from fees and customs duties as well as the cost of loading and unloading. The decision also provides for granting importers the sum of $10 for each tonne of imported materials in accordance with the rate of exchange of the dollar against the Iraqi dinar as soon as the goods arrive, in addition to one-time fueling of the freighters.

The Iraqi chambers of commerce appealed to importers to sign contracts and import via Iraqi ports. [passage omitted]

Decision Made for 'Private Reasons'

JN2012093593 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] AL-DUSTUR has learned that the Jordanian and Iraqi transport ministers will meet in the next few days in Amman. The two ministers will discuss Iraq's decision to divert its UN-permitted imports for the public and private sectors to its ports in the Arabian Gulf.

Iraqi Transport Minister Ahmad Murtada will visit Jordan en route to Cairo to take part in a meeting for Arab transport ministers on 29 December.

Responsible sources at the Iraqi Transport Ministry said they believe the Iraqi decision was made for private reasons. They said the Port of al-'Aqabah will in the meantime continue to receive vessels, especially large ships, carrying goods imported for Iraq.

The Jordanian Shipping Agents Association has declined comment on the Iraqi decision.

DPK, PUK To Cooperate in Settling Differences

JN1912182693 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Following a series of meetings between the political bureaus of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK] and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] from 18 October until 18 December, a joint meeting of the two parties political bureaus was held at the headquarters of Jalal Talabani in Irbil yesterday, 18 December, in the presence of brothers Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani.

During the meeting, discussions dealt with the security situation in the cities of Iraqi Kurdistan. Reference was made to the recent incidents that began with the incident of the 24th Brigade. The two sides decided in a fraternal manner to solve all problems with wisdom and responsibility, a sense of cooperation and common fate, and to tackle the question of carrying arms through the rule of law and the control of the towns by the [word indistinct]. They also decided to protect all our people's bureaus, safeguard the parliament and the government of Kurdistan, and entrench the rule of law.

After comprehensive discussions in the recent meetings, the following strategic agreement was reached:
1. The DPK and PUK reaffirm the fateful and strategic alliance between them to implement all the decisions and agreements signed between brothers Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, in addition to all the decisions that were made during the past meetings between the two sides.
2. To unify practical political stands by exchanging viewpoints and ideas on all issues dealing with Kurdistan and the region.
3. To tackle problems and obstacles through fraternal dialogue and ban military solutions.
4. To form a joint command from the two sides with the participation of parliament and the Kurdistan government. This command will be comprised of brothers Mas'ud Barzani, Jalal Talabani, the speaker of parliament, the prime minister, and two members of the two parties political bureaus to lead our people's movement in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The discussions during the meetings and the decisions were made in an atmosphere permeated with brotherhood and mutual trust. Both sides addressed all the issues that deal with our people's movement, the parliament, the Kurdistan government, and how to enhance and develop the supremacy of law. The two sides voiced their indignation and denunciation of past negative incidents.

The details of this agreement will be made public to the honest citizens of Kurdistan during the next days.

Immortality to [illegible] people's martyrs. Long live the unity of our people. [signed] The DPK and the PUK Political Bureaus, 18 December 1993

Barzani Says PKK Transfers Base To Kurdistan

JN1912140893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, has stated that the Turkish Kurdish Workers Party [PKK] has transferred its base from the Lebanese al-Biqa' Valley to northern Iraq.

In an interview with AL-HAYAH, Barzani estimated the number of Kurdish fighters at 1,000. He said that their transfer violates the agreement signed between the Kurdish administration and the PKK, which states that this party will not exercise any military activity or any training within Iraqi Kurdistan.

Barzani described the PKK as the most serious threat to the future of the Kurdish nation.

With respect to the resumption of dialogue with the Iraqi Government, Mas'ud Barzani said that this decision is left to the Kurdish parliament. He called for maintaining international pressure on the Iraqi regime to compel it to implement all the UN Security Council resolutions.

PUK Radio Cites U.S. Conditions on Sanctions

NC1912181393 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1705 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The U.S. Administration intends to impose more conditions on the Iraqi regime before the UN sanctions can be lifted. These conditions include requiring the Iraqi regime to stop the repression of Kurds and Shiites in Iraq and to officially recognize Kuwait as an independent state.

The NEW YORK TIMES cites Madeleine Albright, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, as saying that the Clinton Administration is currently holding contacts with other permanent members of the UN Security Council for this purpose. Albright said the U.S. stand is supported by Britain, France, and Russia.

Iran Urged To Prove Desire for Normalizing Ties

JN2012101393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0810 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 20 Dec (INA)—AL-THAWRAH says that normalizing relations with Iran is easy if Iran reciprocates Iraq's sincere, principled desire.

In an article today, the newspaper, speaking for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, urges the rulers of Iran to respond to Iraq's proposals and abandon maneuvers and equivocation.

The paper further urges the Tehran regime to assume its legal and international responsibilities and deal seriously and in good faith with Iraq to resolve all outstanding issues to serve their national interests and the region as a whole.

AL-THAWRAH also asks the rulers of Iran not to get carried away by foreign conspiracies and intrigues, and to prove their sincere desire to normalize relations with Iraq. These foreign conspiracies seek to prevent normalization between Baghdad and Tehran so as to undermine security and stability in the region. [passage omitted]

Paper Ridicules U.S. Vote on Israeli Arms

JN1912104693 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Dec (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, has ridiculed the duplicity marking the U.S. Administration's policy toward international issues.

In an article today, the paper says: It is striking that the Western nations, headed by the United States, should vote against the wishes of the international community when the UN General Assembly reiterated its demand that the Zionist entity join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

The paper notes that the international community is well aware of the dangers entailed in Tel Aviv's acquisition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, particularly since this poses threats to security and peace in the region and the world at large.

The paper adds: When its leadership of the world is unrivalled, the United States pursues an exposed policy grounded in the use of double standards, performs the duties of an international policeman, wages wars on world states and peoples, engages in killing and starvation, and undermines the sovereignty and independence of world nations on the pretext that these nations are in possession of weapons of mass destruction. In the meantime, it has chosen to turn a blind eye to the Zionist entity, which is in possession of mass destruction weapons, advancing the argument that it is a "democratic and friendly state."

The paper adds: Washington and its allies have launched a ferocious war against our people and country, and ensured the passage of unfair resolutions against us to lay siege to Iraq and starve its people in order to contain its alleged efforts to modernize its arms capabilities, although Iraqi scientific facilities were inspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency. In contrast, the Tel Aviv rulers have continued to oppose such inspection.

The paper goes on to say: Washington no longer speaks of the "Zionist entity" as a U.S. forward post to be used as a springboard for aggression on the Arabs and Muslims, but rather as an allied "democratic state." According to Washington's rules, the allies have the right to possess mass destruction weapons, while others are to be denied the right to legitimate self-defense.

AL-THAWRAH says: The Americans are well aware that the Zionist entity has been occupying Palestinian territories and other Arab territories, for that matter, by force, and that Tel Aviv is forcing its policy on the Arabs of the occupied territories, holding in complete disregard all relevant UN resolutions.

Concluding its commentary, the paper wonders: Where is the Zionist democracy the United States is speaking of to justify the Zionist entity's possession of nuclear weapons and other mass destruction weapons?

AL-THAWRAH urges Western nations to shun their colonialist policies and replace them with rational and balanced policies that take into account the interests of other peoples.

Arab Facilities to Allied Aircraft Protested

JN2012101593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0850 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 Dec (INA)—Iraq has once again protested to the Arab League against the facilities provided by the rulers of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to U.S., British, and French aircraft violating Iraqi airspace and threatening its security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter yesterday to the Arab League secretary general, Iraq's permanent representative said the aircraft violated Iraqi airspace on 14, 15, and 16 December, taking off from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and conducted 129 aggressive sorties.

Iraq's representative enclosed a list detailing these violations and asked that the letter be circulated to Arab League member states.

Saddam Gives Awards to Governorates for Harvests

JN1812095593 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 12 Dec 93 pp 1, 2

[Excerpt] President Saddam Husayn has ordered awards to governorates that made distinguished efforts in their campaigns to harvest wheat and barley in the last agricultural season and to government employees and staff of the ministries and companies involved in these campaigns.

His excellency ordered awards to the top four governorates: Al-Ta'mim Governorate came in first and was awarded 7 million dinars; Ninawa came in second and won an award of 5 million dinars; Salah al-Din was third with an award of 4 million; and al-Qadisiyah fourth with a 3 million-dinar award. [passage omitted]

Official: No Concessions on Security Issues

NC1812184493 Paris AFP in English 1804 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Jerusalem, Dec 18 (AFP)—Israeli and PLO officials were set to begin key talks in Oslo late Saturday [18 December] in a bid to break the deadlock over implementation of the Palestinian autonomy plan, a senior government official said here.

The official, who requested anonymity, said the six-member Israeli team would include Environment Minister Yosi Sarid and Israel's chief negotiator at the autonomy talks in Egypt, General Amnon Shahaq.

The delegations would try to "overcome the differences which arose recently," the official said, but he stressed that Israel would "not make any concessions on security matters."

Asked whether Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin would meet PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo next week the official said "everything depends on the results of the contacts over the next few days."

The two leaders failed to agree on key aspects of implementing Palestinian autonomy at talks in Cairo last Sunday, but said they hoped to meet again in about 10 days' time.

Israel and the PLO began direct talks on October 13 in Egypt to launch Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho by December 13, but failed to meet the deadline set out in the accord signed in Washington in September.

Israeli television said on Saturday that Rabin's political adviser Jacques Neria had "gone abroad" to hold talks with PLO officials, but gave no further details.

Israeli Army Radio meanwhile said Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Foreign Ministry Director-General Uri Savir would join the talks in Oslo on Monday. They would focus on the future Palestinian police force to be deployed in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the radio added. [passage omitted]

Peres Briefs Rabin on Oslo Talks; Momentum Noted

TA2012104993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz]

[Text] This morning Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres held a private meeting. Following this meeting it is possible to say that the Liaison Committee will hold its next meeting tomorrow. This committee, which was established following a previous meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat, deals with the basic problems cropping up in the process of the negotiations between Israel and the PLO. The Israeli delegation will again be headed by Shim'on Peres. It is still unclear where the discussions of the Liaison Committee will be held. The very fact, however, that this committee is meeting so frequently indicates that even if there is no breakthrough—and the various problems and differences of opinion on the security issue are well known—there is enough material to enable the talks to continue. We can thus speak about an atmosphere of progress.

The main problem standing on the way of a possible meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat is the security problem. To be more specific: Who will control the Jordan bridges, the border crossings, and Israel's external borders.

This is the general picture at the present time. To recapitulate, the most interesting development was announced following the meeting between the prime minister and the foreign minister. After the talks in Norway ended it was decided that the two delegations will return to Tunis and Jerusalem to hold consultations, after which it will be decided whether enough progress was made to continue the talks. The answer to this question appears to be affirmative.

The Israeli delegation returned at 0700 today on a special plane authorized for its use by the Norwegian Government in order to save time. At 0930 Shim'on Peres held a private, 20-minute long meeting with Yitzhaq Rabin. Following this meeting it appears that the political process is receiving new momentum, despite the fact that difficulties remain.

Rabin: Delay in Meeting 'Arafat Possible

TA2012114893 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] After the briefing by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin this morning expressed the hope that the negotiations with the PLO end successfully despite the difficulties, and that this would have a positive effect on negotiations with the other Arab delegations.

This morning, Rabin met the visiting Danish prime minister in Jerusalem. The two discussed the situation in the Middle East, the peace process, and the negotiations with the Palestinians. Rabin stressed that another meeting with 'Arafat will only be held after thorough preparations are made, even if this means that the meeting will be delayed by several days. Consultations between the prime minister's bureau and political elements in Jerusalem continue at this stage to prepare for the next meeting of the liaison committee which will be held in a day or two. The location of that meeting is not yet known.

'Arafat-Rabin Telephone Conversation Denied

TA1812191493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem tonight denied a report from Tunis that Yasir 'Arafat spoke yesterday with Yitzhaq Rabin by telephone and discussed the possibility of meeting in Egypt in four days.

Rabin on Goren Remarks, PLO Talks, Syria

TA1912155093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that the remarks made by Rabbi Goren, a former major general on Rabin's general staff, are very serious. Rabin said that there should be no linkage between political positions and calls to soldiers to refuse orders to evacuate settlements in the territories. I also oppose those who called on soldiers not to serve in the territories, the prime minister explained. Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that Rabin was speaking during a visit to Migdal Ha'emeq.

As for the political process, Yitzhaq Rabin said that he did not know whether any real progress had been made at the Olso talks. The Palestinian decisionmakers are not attending the talks there, Rabin noted, and any decision made by the Israeli negotiators also had to be approved in Jerusalem.

The prime minister added that he was not interested in holding another meeting with Yasir 'Arafat unless it brings about progress in the negotiations. Efforts to guarantee such progress are currently under way.

Addressing the issue of the talks with Syria, the prime minister said that a timetable, centered around the meeting between the Syrian and U.S. presidents, had already been prepared.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 19 December carries a recorded interview with Prime Minister Rabin by Menahem Horowitz during a visit to Migdal Ha'emeq "a short while ago."

[Asked about the status of the talks with Syria, Rabin says: "When the secretary of state visited the region, a timetable for negotiations with Syria was devised. This timetable is centered around the meeting between the U.S. and Syrian presidents slated for 16 and 17 January in Geneva. The heads of the Syrian, Lebanese, and probably the Jordanian and Palestinian delegations will arrive in Washington after the meeting to hold initial contacts. If these initial contacts lead to more significant things, the delegations will convene at the end of January or the beginning of February and negotiate."]

At today's weekly cabinet session, security officials reported that there had been a serious erosion in 'Arafat's standing in the territories; nevertheless, the assessment was that there was no alternative to his leadership. Prime Minister Rabin asked the ministers not to comment publicly on 'Arafat's mental health.

Rabin Refuses To Remove PLO From Terrorist List

TA1712201893 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Announcer-read report followed by video report by Dov Gilhar]

[Excerpt] The prime minister has refused to strike the PLO off the list of terrorist organizations, although a proposal in this spirit was submitted to him a month and a half ago. Rabin is deferring his decision until such time as he is satisfied beyond any doubt 'Arafat and his organization have positively abandoned the path of terror. Our correspondent Dov Gilhar has more details:

[Begin recording] [Gilhar] Despite the mutual recognition, the signed Declaration of Principles, and 'Arafat's announcement averring that he is renouncing violent struggle, the prime minister refused to strike the PLO off the list of terrorist organizations. This list contains the names of organizations which the law defines as terrorist. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Hizballah, which joined it in 1989, are the most recent entries.

The cabinet has received a proposal to update the list by striking off the PLO, the Palestine Liberation Army, and Fatah. The proposal was submitted a month and a half ago, but Rabin refused to bring it to a vote, indicating his uncertainty of the PLO's absolute disavowal of terrorism.

[Rabin] Since there is a certain problem here with the Fatah fringe, we want to make certain first, and to amend the legislation later. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Security Officials Urge Syrian Golan Sovereignty

TA1912195693 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Senior security officials have recently been pressuring the prime minister to initiate a significant conciliatory gesture toward Syria. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen notes that several reports submitted to Rabin include a recommendation that Israel recognize Syria's sovereignty over the Golan Heights before an announcement from Damascus regarding Syria's readiness to establish full peace.

Iran Said To Have DPRK Missiles 'Within Year'

NC2012101093 Paris AFP in English 0945 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Jerusalem, Dec 20 (AFP)—Iran will within a year have North Korean-built missiles capable of hitting Israeli territory, according to the air force intelligence chief.

"Iran will have Korean Nodong missiles in a year which could be deployed in the west of the country and reach Israel," Colonel "A" told the latest edition of the Israeli Air Force Review published on Monday [20 December].

"There is no doubt that Iran is also trying to obtain the capacity to produce chemical and nuclear warheads," which could be carried by the Nodong, said the colonel whose identity is kept secret.

Pyongyang successfully test-fired the Nodong-1, a sophisticated Scud missiles with a range of about 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) in May, according to Japan.

The colonel said Tehran was trying to develop aircraft and missiles "directly threatening" Israel and at the same time continuing a long-term nuclear programme.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said in August that Syria and probably Iran had received deliveries by Russian aircraft of North Korean Scud-C missiles with a range of 600 kilometres (370 miles).

However, the colonel said Syria had not ordered any SA-10 or SA-11 Russian surface-to-air missiles because of economic difficulties and a "certain pause" in the arms race linked to the Middle East peace process.

The colonel also said Iraq "apparently" still had missiles and launchers which U.N. disarmament inspectors had failed to locate.

Iraq launched 39 Scud missiles at Israel during the 1991 Gulf War killing one person, injuring hundreds and damaging thousands of homes.

Hamas Urged To Stop Violence in Territories

NC1712173893 Paris AFP in English 1646 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Amman, Dec 17 (AFP)—Israel has called on the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas to end its attacks on Israelis in the occupied territories, HAMAS spokesman in Jordan Muhammad Nazzal told AFP on Friday [17 December].

"The Israeli authorities recently contacted certain Hamas leaders held in their prisons and asked them to urge the movement's leadership to stop armed operations," Nazzal said.

The Israeli authorities "did not propose anything specific in return," the official said, "but the Hamas leaders told them the armed struggle would continue until the occupation had ended."

The Moslem fundamentalist group is opposed to the autonomy accord signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on September 13, granting limited autonomy to the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

On Thursday Israeli troops arrested Shaykh Muhsin Abu-'Ayta, a Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip.

At a Hamas rally on Saturday the cleric said his movement would step up its attacks on Israeli targets.

'Imad 'Akl, head of the HAMAS armed wing 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, was shot dead by Israeli undercover troops in Gaza City on November 24.

Hamas Deportees Permitted To Return Home

TA1912204893 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] This evening, dozens of the returning Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] deportees were permitted to return to their homes in Nabulus, Hebron, and Ramallah. Reporting from Ramallah, our correspondent in the territories Golan Yokhpaz says that family members of the deportees crowded opposite the Civil Administration building in town. They are planning to hold large celebrations tonight in order to mark the return of their relatives.

Approximately 40 deportees arrived in the Gaza Strip one hour ago. They will apparently be released to their homes tonight.

Ramallah, Nabulus Declared Closed Military Zones

TA1612193493 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Excerpts] We open this program with a report about what seems to be a firm policy on the part of the government and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] vis-a-vis the settlers: The areas of Nabulus and Ramallah were declared closed military zones this evening to prevent the settlers from marching with a Bible scroll to Joseph's Tomb. The IDF says it is merely blocking roads, while the settlers contend that this constitutes a closure or even a curfew. [passage omitted]

IDF sources say an agreement is emerging whereby the settlers will be allowed to march to Joseph's Tomb next Tuesday [28 December] under its supervision. Meanwhile, our correspondents report that most roads have reopened and only the Tapuah junction remains blocked.

Army Bans Night Traffic in Hebron

TA1712200293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] The Army has banned the use of cars at night in Hebron. The ban is an attempt to prevent terrorist attacks. Several terror attacks have taken place after dark recently from passing cars, with shots fired at settlers.

'Terrorist' Cells Uncovered in Hebron

TA2012055193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The security forces have uncovered two terrorist cells. One cell in Hebron was responsible for the murder of yeshiva student Erez Shmu'el in Hebron earlier this year. The two cells belongs to the Popular Front and

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. Members of the second cell, also in Hebron, attempted to murder Avraham Zarbiv, who was on his way to the Cave of the Patriarchs.

In Khan Yunus, two wanted men from the Islamic Jihad group were captured during a chase after a suspicious car.

Captured Red Eagle 'Terrorists' Up for Release

TA2012144993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Three terrorists of a Red Eagle squad were captured this afternoon at the al-Shati' refugee camp in Gaza. They were found in possession of a submachine gun and an assault rifle. Our correspondent says that two of them will be released because their names appear on the list of terrorists the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] stopped hunting. The third terrorist will remain in custody.

Two 'Terrorists' Wounded; 4 Injured in Ramallah

TA1812185693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Two terrorists were seriously wounded and a third was captured in a shoot-out in the vicinity of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] command in downtown Gaza. Our correspondent Moti Amir says that an initial report indicates that IDF soldiers spotted the three terrorists and fired at them. The security forces closed off the area.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1800 GMT on 18 December adds: "In Ramallah, four Palestinians were slightly injured in clashes today with Israeli soldiers. They were protesting against the agreement between Israel and the PLO. In response to the demonstration, the Army cordoned off the entrances to Ramallah and declared the area a closed military zone.

["There was also a demonstration against the agreement with the PLO in Nabulus."]

Two Attacks on IDF Targets in Gaza Strip Fail

TA1612174793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 16 Dec 93

[Text] A hand grenade was thrown this evening at the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] headquarters in Gaza. There were no injuries and no damage was caused. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that a makeshift explosive charge was thrown at a Border Police base in Khan Yunus today. The charge exploded but nobody was hurt and no damage was caused.

Arab Attacked 'Apparently by Two Jews'

TA1912102693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 19 Dec 93

0[Text] The Arab attacked this morning, apparently by two Jews, was Mahmud Abu-Latish, 51, of the village of Bayt Lid near Tulkarm. His wounds are described as medium to serious and he has been hospitalized at Beilinson Hospital in Petah Tiqva. Our correspondent Shim'on Vilna'i reports that two people traveling in a vehicle with Israeli license plates offered him work as a tiler while he waited at the Geha junction. He entered the vehicle and after traveling a short distance they drove into an orange grove near Pardes Kaz, pushed him out, and attacked him with a iron bar, but he managed to escape. Abu-Latish told the police that the two spoke to him in Hebrew.

Bodies of 3 Arabs Found in Gaza Strip

TA1912114793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Three residents of the Gaza Strip were murdered last night. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that two were suspected of collaborating with the authorities. Their bodies were sent to the forensic medicine laboratory for identification. The body of Samir Qasim, 28, was found in a field near Dayr al-Balah. He was abducted Thursday [16 December], was ordered to stop working as a photographer, and then hanged.

Local Arabs Polled on Residence Preference

TA2012123793 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 20 Dec 93 p 15

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Smadar Peri; all figures as published]

[Text] Only 4 percent of the entire sample of 435 Arab men and women, citizens of the State of Israel, replied that they would prefer to reside in the Palestinian state, if and when one is established.

The question, which was part of a telephone poll conducted by the Arabic-language Israeli weekly Al-RABI', asked the interviewees whether they will remain in their present place of residence in Israel after the establishment of a Palestinian state, or rather move to the Palestinian state.

Some 78 percent of the interviewees replied that they would prefer to continue living within the Green Line as citizens of the State of Israel. Some 9 percent refused to respond to the question.

The second question posed to the polled public was: Who is the most esteemed Arab-Israeli figure, in your opinion?

Some 73 percent graded Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, a gynecologist serving as PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, at the top of the list. Second came Knesset Member Tawfiq Zayyad, while Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, the Israeli Islamic Movement leader, came in third.

Jordan Not To Boycott Talks Despite 'Reservations'

JN1812081893 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 18 Dec p 1

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—Jordan will not boycott the multilateral working groups meetings in Arab capitals despite its reservations over moving the negotiations on regional cooperation to the Middle East area, a senior official said Friday [17 December].

Four Arab states have accepted to host multilateral peace talks, meeting one of Israel's long-term demands to move the talks to the region. Jordan had resisted the idea of Arab-Israeli negotiations in Arab capitals as "premature normalisation."

The steering committee of the multilateral talks, which reached its decision in Tokyo Wednesday, announced that the arms control talks will be held in Qatar, the refugees issue in Egypt, water resources in Oman and economic development in Morocco, the environment committee is to meet in Holland [as published].

"We will not boycott the multilateral talks in Arab capitals," a senior official, who asked for anonymity, told the JORDAN TIMES. He said that the Kingdom will participate since it is committed to peace and believes in the need to support any effort that would advance a solution to the Middle East conflict.

"We are going to carry on and push forward any effort towards peace," the senior official said, adding, however, that the Kingdom still considered the move to Arab capitals "too early."

Jordan was under pressure either to voice support for moving the talks into the region or host one of the working groups in Amman. But the Kingdom insisted that it was "premature normalisation" and would appear as a good-will gesture when very little progress was being made on the bilateral level.

As the subject continued to come up during regional talks over the past year, Jordan worked to maintain this position "until such a time when Israel provides for real progress in the bilateral as well as multilateral talks," another Jordanian official said.

Officials privately maintain that the Kingdom's position shifted to "neutrality" when it became apparent that several Arab countries were willing to host the multilateral talks.

"We were not going to actively support the notion, but it also become clear that we couldn't successfully lobby against it," the senior Jordanian official said.

Officials recall that when the multilateral steering committee earlier this year proposed Tunisia as a possible venue for its next meeting on refugees, "we were not informed that Tunisia was going to accept the recommendation."

With the general mood shifting to accommodation Israel's argument that shifting talks to Arab capitals "would indicate strong commitment to peace talks," Jordan, according to the officials, decided on adopting a position of being largely "uninvolved."

Officially, the Jordanian government will attend the multilateral talks in the host capitals, whether in Arab states or elsewhere, but will not host any of these meetings "until concrete progress is made from the Israeli side."

The announcement from Tokyo, carried by Agence France Press (AFP), reported that Danielle Cortez, the head of the American team to the coordination committee, said that the negotiations of the five working groups will begin in the first quarter of 1994.

Syria and Lebanon continue to boycott the multilateral talks which they officially said were "premature" before bilateral talks resolve the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

While Jordan's position is more lenient on the issue, officials said, the Kingdom, in view of the Syrian and Lebanese position, could not appear to be the only "confrontation" state to be hosting the working groups.

A large number of countries represented in the steering committee have expressed their desire to host the meeting of the working groups, according to American delegate Cortez.

The head of the Russian delegation to the committee said he was still hoping that Syria and Lebanon would join the meetings, stressing that Moscow had vital interests in the Middle East region and would pursue efforts towards peace.

Another decision taken by the committee said a subcommittee on communications would meet in Paris.

'Arafat To Visit 20-25 Dec, To Sign Agreement

JN1912115393 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 19 Dec 93 pp 1, 24

[By Nabil 'Amr]

[Text] Jordanian political sources have said that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will pay an official visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 20-25 December to sign the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement previously initialed by the Jordanian and Palestinian sides. This agreement, the sources maintained, is extremely important for ending the Israeli domination of the economy of the occupied territories.

These sources have not concealed their concern because the PLO has not thus far signed the agreement, and has

failed to revive the six bilateral coordination committees formed in the aftermath of the Gaza-Jericho agreement signed in Washington. These committees were assigned the task of examining the best means to build a credible and honest Jordanian-Palestinian relationship, and formulate detailed conceptions regarding future ties in light of the gains that the Palestinians could extricate from the Israelis.

The sources affirmed that Jordan is still working to coordinate with the PLO, and that it is still urging the Americans and Europeans to extend political, economic, and financial support to it.

The same sources informed AL-DUSTUR that the information available to them confirms that the Americans stressed to 'Arafat during Christopher's meeting with him in Amman the importance of coordinating with the Jordanians, and also of signing the economic agreement with Jordan. The sources maintained that Israel reiterated, during the meeting in Cairo between 'Arafat and Rabin, that it cannot allow the Palestinians to issue their own currency.

A senior Palestinian official has affirmed to AL-DUSTUR the Jordanian view that the Jordanian-Palestinian "economic" agreement will be signed sooner or later, noting that reports from the occupied territories indicate that the Palestinians prefer to adhere to Jordanian passports and Jordanian currency, and also that they oppose the Israeli economic hegemony as well as the involvement of the Israeli shekel in monetary transactions in the Arab markets of the West Bank and Gaza Strip once the occupation is terminated.

The same official added that several memoranda have been sent to the Palestinian leadership, urging it to expedite the endorsement of the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement and the reopening of Jordanian banks in the occupied territories, because this would have positive effects on the economy of the occupied territories, not to mention that it would reassure entrepreneurs and create economic stability, particularly since the business interests in the East Bank and the West Bank of the Jordan River are intertwined.

The reports coming from Tunis indicate that the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is being accorded due attention by the Palestinian leaders, who are meeting there, especially after the failure of the Palestinian efforts with the Americans, Israelis, British, and others to launch a Palestinian central bank and issue a Palestinian currency unit for circulation in the occupied territories. Nonetheless, there is a plan to issue a token Palestinian currency similar to commemorative stamps that can be kept, but not circulated.

These reports also stated that some Palestinian officials urged 'Arafat to endorse the economic agreement with Jordan, especially since all sides, including the Palestinians of the occupied territories, believe that the agreement constitutes a significant factor of economic and social stability, not to menti on that it would help the Palestinians build their own future.

Given all this, important Jordanian-Palestinian meetings may be held next week. It is to be recalled that Jordan has, in principle, agreed that the PLO could nominate three persons to serve as members of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Jordan, which will supervise the banks operating in the occupied territories and currency circulation there.

Bank Governor on West Bank Branch Reopenings

JN1812202693 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Dec 93

["Exclusive" interview with Central Bank of Jordan Governor Dr. Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi by Amjad Abidah; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Nabulsi] Reopening the branches of the Jordanian banks which were closed in 1967 is an issue that dates back to 1968, shortly after these branches were closed. Since that time, we have felt that the continued closure would not be in the interest of our kinsfolk in the occupied territories. There is a need to help them and facilitate both their living conditions and their economic life by reopening these branches.

Numerous attempts were made in the past by these banks, or by other international institutions and organizations, to mediate the reopening of these branches. These attempts did not bear any fruit, so these branches have remained closed until the present time. Of course, some branches of only one Jordanian bank; namely the Cairo-Amman Bank, were reopened in 1986. Since that time, these branches have been operational. At that time, this bank came under a special agreement due to its direct relationship with a request to reopen branches.

Now that the peace negotiations have been continuing, we feel that the time is now very opportune to discuss with the competent authorities the reopening of these branches. Contacts were actually made as part of the peace negotiations held in Washington to reopen these branches. These negotiations and contacts resulted in an agreement in principle that the branches closed in 1967 would reopen according to a system of new arrangements we will immediately announce to the banks. In fact, we have begun to announce these arrangements to the concerned banks. There were eight banks, with approximately 31 branches, operating in the occupied territories.

We have reached a memorandum of understanding on the basic principles of operation for these branches and how to open and license them. We also worked out appendixes for this memorandum showing the activities of these banks and the rules to supervise them. The most important point in this memorandum is that it is an umbrella for all banks, not only for one bank. Equally important is the fact that when these banks open and begin work they will operate under the direct supervision of the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ].

[Abidah] What is the CBJ's role in strictly supervising the branches in the West Bank. How will these branches be linked to the CBJ?

[Al-Nabulsi] Clear provisions and rules in the agreement enable us to begin direct monitoring and supervision. Our observers and supervisors will be offered complete facilities to visit the banks in the West Bank and to supervise and audit their work and accounts. Arrangements for this are ready. In case of any delay in supervision, however, we will take a different position on this issue.

We are responsible for both these banks and their work abroad in accordance with known international agreements, referred to as the Basle agreements. We may even have a presence in the West Bank, in the form of an office or two there, which would host a number of inspectors and other personnel charged with professionally monitoring these branches.

[Abidah] Your Excellency: Would you explain the period mentioned in today's newspapers, namely, [that a PLO response to a proposed Palestinian-Jordanian economic agreement is expected before] 20 December?

[Al-Nabulsi] In fact, I was surprised by what was published in today's newspapers. I wondered much about the linkage between opening the bank branches and any economic agreement between Jordan and the Palestinian brothers. These are two separate issues. Actually, our Palestinian brothers were briefed on our agreement with the Israeli side concerning the reopening of bank branches. I do not believe that there is any [Palestinian] objection to this agreement. The Palestinian-Jordanian agreement is a completely different issue. There is no link between these two agreements. All that can be said is that we have taken measures and are awaiting the green light from the Jordanian Government to proceed with this matter. I believe this matter will be finalized in a few days.

In a meeting two days ago, I actually instructed the concerned banks to be ready for the reopening process and to apply for licenses in a few days. Our relations with the occupied territories and the possibilities of full coordination with the Palestinian brothers is an issue with specific peculiarity. I believe this issue will be studied at the appropriate time as part of the general negotiations designed to coordinate economic and financial policies between the two countries.

Return to Oslo 'Serious Setback' to Peace Plan

JN2012112593 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 25

[Editorial: "Back to Oslo"]

[Text] The return of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to the Norwegian capital, Oslo, is a serious setback to the Arab-Israeli peace plan which has been adopted and sponsored by the international community. This return aims at "appeasing" Israeli leaders' deep-rooted intransigence threatening the peace process.

Washington's implicit evasion of its responsibilities represented by sponsoring the negotiations and guaranteeing their success constitutes additional encouragement to Tel Aviv, which tries to impose its conditions and concepts of the solution or of any past or future agreements.

Regrettably, we hear statements made by Palestinian leaders while heading for the negotiating table about their understanding of "meeting some Israeli security demands" while forgetting, or pretending to forget, that "the security problem," in accordance with the Israeli strategy, is sufficient reason to occupy territories, depopulate them, and impose its hegemony. This problem, also, is a cover and excuse for blackmail in order to gain more concessions and impose the Israeli concept of a solution.

The issues of crossings, settlements, and defining the Jericho area, which are important with regard to affirming Palestinian identity, sovereignty, and independence, are—eventually—the beginning of differences over the interpretation of the provisions of the agreement. So, any Palestinian retreat will be a serious precedent which Israel will adopt as a working course to implement the rest of the provisions of the self-rule agreement in order to liquidate the agreement, obstruct it, and empty it of its content.

Bringing the peace process back to its sound course and international point of reference, which Israel tries to evade by resorting to secret bilateral talks, is the first step toward correcting the course and removing the gaps created in Arab coordination by the Oslo accord. Israel exploited these gaps by exhausting the Palestinian side which departed from this point of reference and "remained silent" vis-a-vis the factors of its strength represented by maintaining coordination relations with all Arab countries in general, and particularly Jordan, which spared no effort in supporting the Palestinian people to remain steadfast on their land and gain their legitimate rights.

Paper on U.S. Conditions To End Iraq Embargo

JN2012094693 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Why These Impossible Conditions on Iraq?"]

[Text] The U.S. Administration's prejudice against Iraq, and its flagrant enmity toward that country are more than obvious. For, despite Iraq's compliance with international legitimacy and its full commitment to implementing its resolutions one after another, the U.S. Administration and its Western allies which have permanent seats at the UN Security Council have refused to lift the unfair embargo imposed on Iraq, or even to mitigate this embargo and its heavy burdens, which are weighing heavily on the Iraqi people and Iraqi children.

It is peculiar that the U.S. Administration should step up its anti-Iraq campaign and threaten the use of force against Iraq at a time when it sits back with folded arms, idly watching human rights violations by many world states, as well as savage attacks and various kinds of fascist ethnic cleansing operations by some world states against peaceful peoples.

The Serbs have defied the United Nations and held in complete disregard the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which call on them to end their savage aggression on the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, the U.S. Administration and its allies within the EC have done nothing to halt Serbian crimes and end this crazy and aggressive war against Muslims.

Worse still, the U.S. Administration, along with Britain, has defended Israel's nuclear armament drive before the United Nations and its agencies, and voted against a draft resolution that called on Israel to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. This confirms that the United States is employing double standards in its handling of international issues and regional conflicts and wars.

The stringent conditions the U.S. Administration wants Iraq to meet before the unfair sanctions imposed on it can be lifted reflect unprecedented injustice and prejudice that have never been seen in the history of mankind.

Moreover, this U.S. policy, which is hostile to Iraq and the Arab nation, can torpedo the pillars of security, stability, and peace in this region, which is extremely vital to the world's prosperity.

The U.S. Administration in particular, and the influential UN Security Council members in general, must demonstrate good faith toward Iraq by lifting the embargo imposed on it so that the seeds of devastating regional wars may be removed from the earth, and from Arab consciences as well.

Iraq has complied with the relevant UN resolutions and met UN conditions to ensure the lifting of the sanctions imposed on it. Moreover, it has cooperated positively with the UN inspection teams.

Given all this, the world body must announce an end to the sanctions imposed on Iraq, and allow it to export its oil to international markets so that it may secure its people's basic requirements of medicines and food supplies. For, Iraqi children die by the hundreds every day as a result of the scarcity of food and medicine.

The Iraqi people are experiencing real starvation due to the unfair embargo imposed on them, and this conflicts with international conventions and norms, with heavenly principles and injunctions, and also with the ethics of humanity.

In this regard, it must be said that the Arab and Islamic states which are complying with the anti-Iraq sanctions must shoulder their grave responsibilities. These countries are dutybound to intervene with the world organization and influential states, and the United States in particular, to bring about an end to the sanctions.

Otherwise, the peoples of this region could experience regional wars and conflagrations.

Buwayz Views Peace Process, Syria's Role

JN1912173793 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Dec 93 p 3

[Interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz by Bisharah Shirbil and 'Ali al-Ruzz in London; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Do you see a setback for the Lebanese Government's agenda in the recent recommendation of the UN General Assembly, which failed to mention Resolution 425?

[Buwayz] Let me put the record straight. Resolution 425 was issued by the Security Council—the highest UN authority. That resolution can only be annulled by a counter resolution from the same body. What happened the day before yesterday was that the General Assembly issued a number of recommendations on many matters, as is the practice at the end of each session. The General Assembly saw fit to make a recommendation in support of the peace process based on the preamble to the Madrid formula, which at the time did not take account of Resolution 425. We all know about the contacts between the Lebanese side and the conference cosponsors that produced letters of assurances that later incorporated Resolution 425. These letters are an integral part of the peace process and the basis on which Lebanon joined the negotiations.

I rega.d the recommendation issued by the General Assembly as deficient. However, it does not annul a Security Council resolution or the agreement between Lebanon and the conference cosponsors, to which the Israelis had access at the time.

Thus, legally speaking, Resolution 425 still stands, as do the letters of assurances.

[Reporter] Have Lebanon's interests been helped by the fact that only Syria and Iran voted against the recommendation?

[Buwayz] Lebanon would have liked all the countries to reject the recommendation. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Can Lebanon announce a resumption of the talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks without first checking with Damascus?

[Buwayz] Let's be realistic. Are we supposed to ignore Syria's weight in the Arab-Israeli conflict? Syria has traditionally been the capital of Arab decisionmaking and is in possession of a major military arsenal in the Middle East. Its file in the Arab-Israeli conflict is one of the most complex. Syria can make or break the negotiations. Nobody's interests stand to gain from going it alone. Look at Jordan, for instance. Jordan has come a long way down the road of the negotiating process and the scale of its problem with Israel is lesser than that of Syria. The Syrian influence on Jordan's domestic scene is nonexistent and yet Jordan still preferred to wait for a comprehensive Arab settlement; namely Syria's and Lebanon's decision. This is because peace will have to be comprehensive or it will not come at all.

[Reporter] Jordan exercised its free will and is waiting for a comprehensive solution. But how are Lebanon's interests advanced by leaving its foreign policy matters completely in the hands of Syria?

[Buwayz] This is not the case and is an exaggerated statement. I will not go into the details of Syrian-Lebanese foreign policy coordination. I would point out, though, that there has been no clash of interests between us and Syria. To date, not once has Israel acted in a manner that shows any respect for UN resolutions and it has failed to pull back from Lebanon. The way things are brought up gives the impression that Israel is ready to withdraw from Lebanon and comply with UN resolutions and that Lebanon is the recalcitrant party. What we have gained from Israel thus far are contentions that it had no claims on Lebanese territory or resources, which amounts to nothing in the way of assurances. If indeed Israel has no ambitions in Lebanon, let it pull out from Lebanon or come up with a withdrawal plan. The way you phrased your question suggests that things on the Lebanese front have been sorted out and are waiting for a settlement on the Syrian front before implementation. Israel must put forward a timetable for withdrawal, and then we will determine whether our national interests lie in awaiting solutions on the other tracks. [passage omitted]

Views Christopher Tour, UN Resolutions

JN1712210593 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1803 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, in Beirut, by Salim Badawi, in the studio; from the weekly "The Event" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Buwayz] I believe the failure to visit Lebanon was a gap in Secretary Christopher's tour. It was a particular gap for the United States, which always and constantly talks about Lebanon's sovereignty and independence. However, I do not believe this issue has political motives or implications. Of course, the United States devoted this tour to the basic complex that revolves around occupied Syrian Golan. The United States believes resolving this issue may help achieve a breakthrough on other tracks, including the Lebanese track.

Despite these explanations, I believe Secretary Christopher should have visited Lebanon and listened to Lebanese authorities and to their peculiarities regarding negotiations. He should have briefed these authorities on the U.S. viewpoint on the issues raised.

[Badawi] Wasn't this discussed in the telephone contact held with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri?

[Buwayz] I believe these crucial issues need serious talks. These cannot be held in that way.

[Badawi] In your opinion, however, wasn't the Lebanese file or position discussed in Damascus, besides the discussions on the Syrian track between Christopher and President al-Asad?

[Buwayz] Naturally, when any Arab leader meets with U.S. officials, comprehensive discussions of various issues are usually held. Likewise, when we meet with U.S. officials, we discuss all tracks with them. However, I reiterate, this is not enough. There are peculiarities and crucial points that should have been discussed with the Lebanese side.

[Badawi] So, what is the alternative? Will any meetings with U.S. officials be held soon in Washington or other capitals, or even in Beirut?

[Buwayz] There are alternatives, that is, ordinary diplomatic channels, the exchange of letters, and similar things. However, this cannot cancel the need for direct contact.

[Badawi] Your Excellency the Minister: In light of the results Christopher achieved in the wake of his talks in Damascus, that is, the resumption of bilateral negotiations in Washington next month, will Lebanon attend the new round of negotiations?

[Buwayz] Naturally, so far an official invitation to take part in these negotiations has not been issued. The picture is not yet clear regarding the preparation for these negotiations. You know that any round of negotiations was always preceded by certain contacts and discussions to produce space for a breakthrough in directions. I do not believe these contacts have been completed and that there has been [words indistinct] vision [words indistinct], perhaps so in the coming days. A certain movement in this direction may take place in coming days.

[Badawi] After Christopher's tour ended, a Lebanese-Syrian summit was held in Damascus.

[Buwayz] Naturally, from the Lebanese and Syrian viewpoint, this summit discussed the proposals made. Of course, it is the task of these summits—which seek coordination on joint and basic issues—to discuss these considerations. As I said, however, I believe all facts have not been completed regarding the coming round. Although a principle exists, we still await some clarifications about the seriousness and credibility of this round and about the technical and practical objectives that may be achieved in this round. In other words, what would be expected of the next round? Will it be a declaration of general principles, or a declaration of advanced and clear principles, or the laying of a new mechanism, or other things?

[Badawi] Your Excellency, Minister Faris Buwayz: What is your position on all that is being said about Resolution 425 and having it excluded? This leads us to ask if it was a mistake on your part to join the Madrid negotiations, which do not consider Resolution 425 as a term of reference?

[Buwayz] This is nonsense and speaks of political naivete, in the full sense of the word. First, there is a peace process taking place on a regional level in the Middle East. For more than 13 years, Resolution 425 remained a bad check. It remained unimplemented. Nobody could implement it. It was not possible to implement this resolution outside the framework of a peaceful context, such as the one created by the peace conference. Second, Lebanon's problem with Israel is not confined to occupied Lebanese territory. If Resolution 425, if implemented, solves the problem of occupied Lebanese territory, other issues will remain. There is the issue, or the problem, of Arab-Israeli peace. Lebanon is part of the Arab world. It has its own opinions and character. It has to decide whether to join the Arab states in this regard or not. This has not been possible outside the framework of the peace process. At least 400,000 Palestinians are in Lebanon. Resolution 425 does not tackle this issue. It only talks about occupied Lebanese territory. There is no framework outside the peace process that can resolve the problem of the Palestinian presence. Here, I have to question the grounds for raising this issue. Do those who do not want Lebanon to take part in the peace process mean to exclude and remove Lebanon? Shouldn't Lebanon be at the negotiating table, just like other concerned states, to raise all the problems that the peace process can solve?

[Badawi] Then, what is your position on the current exclusion of Resolution 425, even on the international scene?

[Buwayz] This is another issue. Resolution 425 has been issued by the UN Security Council, which is the highest UN authority. Only a resolution by the same authority can abolish this resolution. Therefore, what has actually taken place is a recommendation by the UN General Assembly to support the peace process. This recommendation, effectively, cannot abolish a UN Security Council resolution. This recommendation took into consideration the preamble of the Madrid invitation. Then, Resolution 425 was not included. You know, this resolution was added through negotiations between the Lebanese and U.S. authorities and the cosponsors of the conference. The subsequent letters of assurance, which we consider an indivisible part of the peace process, confirmed this fact. Therefore, an ordinary recommendation by the General Assembly cannot abolish a Security Council resolution. Some interpretations, which we certainly do not accept, say this recommendation is based on the Madrid preamble, and perhaps bears no political meaning.

[Badawi] Your excellency the minister, this is my last question. Away from the Lebanese track, how do you assess the failure this week to begin implementing the Palestinian-Israeli agreement?

[Buwayz] From the outset, we warned against the so-called separate solutions. We believed and continue to believe there can be either a comprehensive peace or nothing. We say peace requires a decision by Arabs, all Arabs. Hence, I believe any separate step from any side must face the same obstacles. Only a comprehensive decision can cover any gap in any agreement. Therefore, I believe that as long as the Gaza-Jericho agreement remains isolated, it will face many pressures. Progress on other fronts may give it the political cover that it needs.

Deputy Prime Minister Leaves for Damascus

NC1912123793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Intensive efforts continue between Beirut and Damascus in preparation for a meeting of the Supreme Syrian-Lebanese Council for Fraternity, Cooperation, and Coordination in Damascus on 21 December. Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr left for Damascus today on the second visit in 24 hours. Nasri Khuri, the council's secretary general, is holding the necessary contacts for the meeting.

Al-Hariri Returns From Turkey

NC1812204893 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and his delegation returned to Beirut at 2115 today after a three-day visit to Turkey.

Relations Between al-Hariri, Others 'Strained'

NC1912080993 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Sources close to President al-Hirawi and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri have noted that the strained relations between President al-Hirawi and Speaker Birri, on one hand, and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, on the other, reflect the true atmosphere that has resulted from the course al-Hariri is following, which is no longer acceptable.

Prime Minister al-Hariri, who cut short his visit to Turkey yesterday, is facing a state of affairs that no one can conceal any longer, particularly after the wide-scale criticism the way he has run government affairs. The deterioration in ties, which has reached a erious point, necessitated contacts between Beirut and Damascus. Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr took part in these contacts in a bid to reach a truce.

Sources close to Speaker Birri cite him as saying that he is not satisfied with the decree on the organization of satellite transmission. He contacted President al-Hirawi and advised him not to sign it. These sources say that Birri and President al-Hirawi are convinced that they can longer cooperate with Prime Minister al-Hariri. The campaigns against al-Hariri by deputies who support Birri can be seen in this light. Birri considers the United Nation's decision to ignore Resolution 425 partly due to the shortcomings of the Lebanese Government and Prime Minister al-Hariri, particularly because the post of Lebanese ambassador in Washington has been kept vacant. Birri also blames the government for its unconvincing behavior in referring draft bills, including the bill on the housing bank, to the Chamber of Deputies. This bill was met with severe criticism in the Chamber of Deputies, and patience ran out with issue of satellite transmission. Birri believes that preference should have been given to Tele-Liban, whereas Prime Minister al-Hariri acted to weaken it in favor of his own television network [Future Television] by linking it to the satellite via the Jurat al-Ballut station. Sources close to the prime minister stressed that he insists on refusing any bill that circumvents the Constitution.

Israeli Forces Advance, Clash With Resistance

NC1812104493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] According to the latest reports from the south, the Israeli occupation forces, which advanced from al-Huqban hill in the direction of al-'Uyun valley between Bayt Lif and Sribbin at 1000 today, retreated at 1050. According to our correspondent, the occupation forces, which advanced approximately 3 km, encountered fierce opposition from the resistance men and the population for 45 minutes, which forced them to withdraw under artillery cover that hit Kafra and Yatar. At 1115, the Israelis renewed their bombardment of Yatar and Kafra. So far, there have been no reports about casualties among the resistance men or the population. Here are more details from our correspondent in the south Muhammad al-Riba'i:

[Begin al-Riba'i recording] The Israeli occupation forces and their affiliate militiamen located in Jabal Humayd, inside the occupied border strip, shelled the outskirts of several villages in the central sector with 120-mm artillery, causing heavy property damage. The villages of Sribbin and the outskirts of [name indistinct], al-Butm mountains, and Yatar, in the western sector, came under a violent artillery barrage at 0500 today, damaging three homes in Sribbin. The resistance men retaliated, firing several Katyusha rockets at the occupation positions inside the occupied border strip. At 1000 today, two Israeli helicopters flew over the area and raked the woods of Yatar and Sribbin with large machine guns, causing a fire in the woods of Bayt Lif. Israeli forces shelled the al-'Asi area [words indistinct] between Sribbin and Yatar. The bombardment prompted the Nepalese contingent of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] to close the highway [words indistinct] at their checkpoint at the road juncture in al-Butm mountains. A joint Israeli-South Lebanese Army infantry force advanced toward Yatar and Sribbin at 1030 in the central sector. The force planted mines in the area surrounding Sribbnin. The hostile force is still in Sribbin and is searching homes and interrogating people.

Resistance Reports Attack 'Repulsed'

NC1812120793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The Islamic Resistance issued a statement at noon today that said that its men repulsed an Israeli attempt to advance in the south. This attempt was accompanied by the shelling of several villages from Jabal Humayd. The shelling crippled traffic for 90 minutes.

According to security forces, the occupation forces and affiliated militiamen have been placed on alert along the occupied border strip since yesterday evening. These forces reinforced their positions along the lines of contact with the liberated areas.

The outskirts of Zawtar al-Gharbiyah came under Israeli tank fire this morning. The attack on Sribbin damaged several homes in the village.

Israeli Forces Shell Villages

NC1812142193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Since 1515 today, Israeli occupation forces have been shelling the villages of Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, and Mazra'at al-Hamra' with tank and mortar fire. Israeli helicopters have also been strafing these villages with machine guns.

In retaliation for the continuous Zionist attacks, a resistance group used RPG's and machine guns to attack two Israeli posts in 'Alman and al-Shumariyah.

Israeli Aircraft Raid Iqlim al-Tuffah Areas

NC1912123493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1158 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] This just in from our correspondent Fatin: We received a report a short while ago that Israeli warplanes launched air raids on the Iqlim al-Tuffah heights. The hostile planes were confronted with antiaircraft fire. Israeli military aircraft flew over the south throughout the morning, breaking the sound barrier.

Israeli military aircraft are continuing their raids on the Iqlim al-Tuffah area. They raided Mlita and Jabal Safi. In the meantime, fierce clashes continue between the Islamic resistance men and Israeli enemy soldiers on the al-Jarmaq-al-'Ayshiyah highway. A Lebanese citizen was injured in Zawtar.

President al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri are now meeting to asses the current developments. Al-Hariri will also brief President al-Hirawi on the outcome of his visit to Turkey.

Israeli Post Under Fire; Crossing Point Reopened

NC2012131293 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The Tallusah post came under bursts of machine gun fire by the resistance men this morning. Israeli forces immediately afterwards bombarded al-Saluqi valley and adjacent areas.

The Israeli forces this morning reopened the Zummarayya crossing point after a closure that lasted for more than a year. The Lebanese army checkpoints in the Marj al-Zuhur area allowed civilian vehicles from the border strip to travel toward al-Biqa'.

SLA Retaliates Against Artillery Barrage

NC2012150693 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1430 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] According to our military correspondent, the periphery of the South Lebanese Army [SLA] posts in al-Shumariyah, Tallusah, and al-Qantarah came under artillery barrage this afternoon from saboteur positions in Qabrikha and Majdal Silm. Two soldiers were slightly injured in the bombardment. The SLA artillery returned the fire at its sources.

U.S. Senators Meet Lebanese 'Fundamentalists'

NC1712140093 Paris AFP in English 1249 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Beirut, Dec 17 (AFP)—U.S. senators have met Lebanese Muslim fundamentalists and Palestinians in Damascus to determine the fate of six missing Israeli soldiers, a fundamentalist leader said here Friday [17 December].

The senators and a congressman, led by Democrat Dennis Deconcini, and the fundamentalists agreed earlier this week to set up committees aimed at repatriating the soldiers who went missing in Lebanon in 1982 and 1986, he said.

Israeli pilot Ron Arad is the only one believed to be alive.

But the militants, who held several meetings with the U.S. delegates in Damascus hotels, also asked for Israel to free hundreds of Arab prisoners, said the fundamentalist leader who requested anonymity.

The committees, including U.S. officials, would release their first report before U.S. President Bill Clinton meets Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva next month, he said.

Deconcini's delegation, which is also expected to visit Beirut, held talks with al-Asad on Thursday.

Syria, the main foreign power-broker in Lebanon, arranged the talks between the delegation and the fundamentalists with the approval of Iranian officials who visited Damascus from Tuesday to Thursday, sources close to the Syrians said here.

The Iranians were headed by Vice President Hasan Habibi.

The fundamentalist leader did not identify the Palestinian and Lebanese fundamentalist groups involved in the talks, but other informed sources said the Iranian-backed Hizballah was present.

A Hizballah team was also in Damascus this week for talks with the Iranian delegation. But the group denied it would have any contact with the United States, following the Syrian mediation offer.

Hizballah and the Syrian-backed Amal, both Shiite Muslim movements, say they have the remains of two Israeli soldiers each.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in Damascus on December 5 that Syria would invite a team from the U.S. House of Representatives foreign affairs committee to visit Damascus as part of the search for the servicemen.

He described the Syrian offer as an "important humanitarian gesture."

Hizballah Deputy Denies Meeting

NC1812115993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Beirut, 18 Dec (MENA)—Lebanese Chamber of Deputies member Muhammad Barjawi, one of the deputies who represents Hizballah, has denied that the party carried out any contacts with a U.S. Senate delegation in Damascus recently.

Barjawi told MENA's correspondent in Beirut that Hizballah did not participate in any direct meetings of this type with any U.S. officials visiting Damascus. He emphasized that no meeting of this type will be held in the future.

Barjawi was commenting on reports that Lebanese Islamic organizations, including Hizballah, had met with U.S. senators to discuss the issue of Israeli MIA's in Lebanon.

The Lebanese deputy said that Hizballah is willing to cooperate with any international humanitarian organization, such as the Red Cross or Amnesty International, to hand over the remains of two Israeli soldiers in exchange for the release of all Lebanese detainees and POW's in Israeli jails. He pointed out that the fate of hundreds of Lebanese nationals, missing since 1985, remains unknown.

Barjawi appealed to the international community, on the occasion of Human Rights Day, to show greater interest in the more than 200 Lebanese POW's and detainees in Israeli prisons.

Egyptian Prime Minister Sidqi Continues Visit

Al-Asad Confers With Sidqi, Others

JN1812190293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] At 1330 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, Egypt's prime minister; Dr. Kamal Ahmad al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning; Sulayman Mutawalli Sulayman, minister of transportation, communications, and civil aviation; Dr. Muhammad Ahmad al-Razzaz, minister of finance; Ahmad Radwan Jum'ah Mansur, minister of state for cabinet and follow-up affairs; Dr. Mahmud Sayyid Ahmad Sharif, minister of local administration (government); Dr. Hamdi 'Abd-al-Wahab al-Banbi, minister of petroleum; Dr. Ibrahim Fawzi 'Abd-al-Wahid, minister of industry and mineral resources; Dr. Venice Kamil Jawdah, minister of state for scientific research; Dr. Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz Mursi, Egypt's ambassador in Damascus; Muhammad 'Abd-al-Salam, and the prime minister's adviser. All are members of the Egyptian side in the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi.

Dr. Sidqi conveyed to the president the greetings of President Muhammad Husni Mubarak which his excellency accepted with thanks. The president asked Dr. Sidqi to convey his greetings and best wishes to President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and the fraternal people of Egypt.

Talks covered the meetings of the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee and the results of these meetings to increase the development of bilateral relations and cooperation in various fields.

The president expressed his satisfaction with what has been achieved so far in terms of developing relations and cooperation between the two fraternal countries. He called for exploring prospects to increase cooperation and develop relations to achieve integration. Discussion also dealt with the situation and developments in the region.

Al-Zu'bi, Sidqi Hold Meeting

JN1912105693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1015 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. Atif Sidqi at 1130 today.

The meeting was attended by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, Dr. 'Isa Darwish, Syrian ambassador in Cairo, and Dr. Mustafa 'Abd-al-'Aziz Mursi, Egyptian ambassador in Damascus.

Talks dealt with bilateral relations and results of meetings of the subcommittees of the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee.

Minutes of Higher Committee Meetings

JN1912180393 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1550 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, 19 Dec (SANA)—The meetings of the sixth session of the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee concluded in Damascus today. The session was cochaired by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi and Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi. Delegations from the two countries attended the meetings.

At the beginning of the session, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi said: Thanks to the sound and continued instructions of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak, our mutual feeling of responsibility has been enhanced in promoting the march of bilateral cooperation, coordination, and integration in various fields.

Al-Zu'bi added: This is an age of great challenges. The economic, cultural, and scientific challenges we face are not new to us. However, international changes have made these economic and technological factors a decisive factor in achieving the strength and self-sufficiency necessary to end subservience and subjugation to others.

Al-Zu'bi continued: In our view, genuine peace means recognizing Arab rights and regaining all of the usurped territories by implementing the UN resolutions under international legitimacy. He said that winning the battle of peace will be largely in the hands of Arabs if their forces are pooled, their positions are unified, and their resources are employed in a way that will benefit them and enhance their unified stand. A large number of agreements and programs have been implemented because popular hopes are wide and our march's economic, social, cultural, technical, and scientific objectives are great. All of the forces and key figures in Egypt and Syria, as well as in other sectors, need to be called upon to increase their awareness of the good results of these programs and objectives so that they can play their roles effectively.

Concluding his speech, al-Zu'bi thanked all those who are contributing to building this great edifice of integration between the two sisterly countries in response to the ambitious will of both countries and at the instructions of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak.

Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi then spoke. He expressed his appreciation for the hospitable reception accorded to him and his accompanying delegation. He said: The greatest honor for us during this visit was our meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad. He added: Time has proven that the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee is a practical and realistic formula for achieving our goals in terms of rapprochement and integration between the two fraternal countries. Each time we meet, we build more onto the edifice of bilateral relations, he said.

Sidqi added that cooperation between Syria and Egypt must be a prelude to comprehensive Arab action, especially since the current challenges to the world necessitate that the Arabs be united and strong. He said that the challenges of peace are greater than those of war, and that peace is in the interest of all sides after Arab rights are restored.

Concluding his statement, Dr. Sidqi sent greetings to the Syrian people and their wise leaders.

Following this, Syrian Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi and Egyptian Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi signed the minutes of the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee meetings. The minutes read: In continuation of the march of coordination and cooperation between the two fraternal countries, whose bases were laid down by the two great leaders Hafiz al-Asad, president of the Syrian Arab Republic, and Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee held the meetings of its sixth round in Damascus from 16-19 December 1993. The Syrian side was headed by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and the Egyptian side by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi.

In an atmosphere permeated by cordiality and understanding, the committee reviewed the achievements of

both countries toward the implementation of the resolutions from previous rounds as well as from the committee's preparatory meetings. The committee has also discussed bilateral relations in all fields and the need to promote cooperation and coordination. In light of what has been agreed upon through bilateral meetings between the competent ministers during the committee's meetings, the committee has achieved the following:

In the field of foreign policy the committee reviewed the political situation in the Arab and international arenas, as well as issues of joint interest. The committee also expressed satisfaction with the level of cooperation, coordination, and consultation between the two countries in all fields.

In the field of technical, scientific, and economic cooperation, the committee expressed its satisfaction with the achievements that have been made in the various economic and technical fields within the framework of the technical and scientific cooperation protocol, which became effective 2 September 1993. It has been decided to continue work in these fields.

In the field of planning, the committee expressed its satisfaction with the contacts and relations among the planning institutions and organizations in the two countries. The committee stressed the need to benefit from the practical and scientific expertise of both countries.

In the field of trade, the committee expressed its desire to promote bilateral trade through calling on the private, the public, and the mixed sectors to intensify their contacts and exert all necessary efforts within the framework of current agreements and the valid regulations of foreign trade in both countries. The committee has made several decisions aimed at promoting cooperation in this field.

In the field of financial affairs and taxation, the committee stressed the need for bilateral contacts on coordinating and exchanging information on financial and tax laws and regulations in both countries. It also stressed the continuation of efforts to coordinate customs and tariffs.

In the field of industry, the committee was satisfied by the scientific and technical achievements realized between the two sides. They were also acquainted with the contracts and agreements reached in many industrial fields, led by ship-building and the manufacture and importation of flexible cast pipes. Technical cooperation; the importation of spare parts; a continued exchange of expertise, particularly in industries where either country enjoys a great deal of experience and high efficiency; as well as preparation for research and consultations over improved production efficiency in industrial firms were also discussed.

In the field of agriculture, the committee emphasized the importance of bilateral agricultural cooperation and coordination and the endorsement of the 1994 executive program. This program includes various activities to enhance cooperation through joint programs for research in biology and chemical fertilizers, exchanging plants and seeds, and conducting field research.

In the field of public works and water resources, the committee was satisfied with the efforts that have been made to implement the resolutions of its previous sessions and the visits that have been exchanged between officials in both countries.

In the field of electricity and energy, the committee expressed satisfaction with the efforts of both countries. It was decided to continue work in order to increase bilateral cooperation and coordination in the field of locally manufactured electric tools and their components. The committee stressed the need for cooperation in the fields of new and renewable energy, and an exchange of experience, information, and training.

In the field of oil and mineral wealth, the committee expressed satisfaction with the distinguished bilateral relations. It reviewed the actions that have been taken on the resolutions from previous sessions and made the appropriate decisions.

In the field of housing, reconstruction, and public utilities, the committee expressed satisfaction with the contacts that have been held and the possibility of using local products for the material, equipment, and pipes needed for projects.

In the field of transportation and communications, the committee expressed satisfaction with what has been implemented in terms of the resolutions taken in its previous sessions, and stressed the need to continue cooperation in the fields of training and rehabilitation for all kinds of land, sea, and air transportation. It made the appropriate decisions designed to enhance and promote this cooperation.

In the information field, the committee stressed the importance of promoting cooperation between the information organizations in both countries in a way that serves their joint objectives. It also stressed the need to exchange radio and television programs, to conclude agreements on joint television production, and to set up an executive program for radio and television dispatches exchanged between the two countries.

In the tourism field, the committee expressed its satisfaction with what has been achieved toward the resolutions of previous rounds of the higher committee. It also acquainted itself with the executive program of the tourism cooperation agreement between the two countries for 1994.

In the health and medical field, the committee stressed the importance of promoting cooperation in the fields of health and medicine between the two countries and of benefiting from the two countries' expertise in this field.

In the field of scientific research, education, and culture, the committee was satisfied with the implementation of the resolutions of the previous rounds. It was decided to

implement the remaining clauses of these resolutions. New decisions have also been made to bolster cooperation in this field.

In the social security field, the two sides agreed to continue contacts to pave the way for finalizing a social security agreement plan as soon as possible.

In the sports and youth field, the committee decided to continue its contacts and action, stressing the importance of signing an executive program on youth affairs, which includes the fields of vanguards, sports, the nurturing of leadership qualities among the young, and the exchange of youth delegations.

In the field of local administration, organization, and management, the committee decided to sign the executive program of the protocol on local administration. It also expressed satisfaction with the results of the officials' visits in the field of organization, management, and training in both countries.

In the awqaf and religious affairs field, the committee stressed the need to continue contacts between experts in both countries with the aim of finalizing the cooperation protocol between the awqaf ministries.

In the field of cooperation and coordination between interior ministries, the committee expressed its satisfaction with the existing relations in the various fields of security cooperation. The committee decided to hold direct contacts and exchange visits between security delegations in the interest of both countries' pursuant to the previous security agreement and what has been agreed upon between officials in both countries.

The committee expressed its satisfaction with the outcome of the meetings held between businessmen from the two countries and the recommendations that appeared in the minutes of their meetings held in Damascus on 14 December, 1993.

It has been decided to convene the seventh round of the higher committee in Cairo in May, 1994.

The two sides also signed an executive program for their bilateral cultural agreement. The program was signed for Syria by Education Minister Muhammad Ghassan al-Halabi and for Egypt by Dr. Venice Kamil Jawdah, minister of state for scientific research.

In statements to reporters, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi said:

We have achieved positive results, which appeared in the joint minutes. We are determined to work together to develop our relations in all spheres in implementation of the directives of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Muhammad Husni Mubarak, which inspire us with hope and strength and a resolve to talk less and do more.

The prime minister added: Over the past three days, joint ministerial committees were hard at work. I believe we have achieved fruitful results that compare favorably with what was accomplished at previous sessions. This is not to underrate past achievements. We have, in the interim, acquired experience and we now have fresh ideas that we sought to confirm during our discussions.

The prime minister indicated that the joint minutes of the meetings included clear and specific references to bilateral trade and guidelines for starting joint projects in the textile industry, land and sea transport, and other areas.

The two sides explored the more realistic approaches to bilateral coordination on world developments and economic blocs and looked into ways to develop an influential and leading role for Syria and Egypt. They also agreed to deepen bilateral cooperation to form a nucleus for inter-Arab cooperation, particularly in this day and age when interests take precedence over all other factors. Syrian, Egyptian, and Arab interests will be served by Arab cooperation and coordination, which is also the road to our economic and social independence.

The prime minister added that during these meetings, the conferees stressed finding means to increase the potentials of available resources in both countries. He said that Egypt and Syria have great potential. If they invest, exploit, and exchange expertise on these resources, then this will contribute to integrated and balanced development in both countries.

The prime minister said that the conferees also decided to encourage commercial exchange and to support institutions in the public, joint, and private sectors.

At the end of his statement, the prime minister conveyed his greetings to the people of Egypt and their leadership.

In a statement to reporters, Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi said: Since our arrival in Syria, the higher committee has been in continuous action on the ministerial and technical levels. Perhaps what distinguishes this session from previous sessions is the agreements that have been reached and the fact that the joint minutes of the meetings assessed all fields of action envisioned by both countries.

Sidqi added that every agreement reached will be implemented with accuracy and as scheduled. He noted that Egyptian-Syrian relations are unprecedented in comparison with other Arab countries as a result of their experiences and the understanding and accord between the leaderships of both countries, especially between President Hafiz al-Asad and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

Sidqi said that the future will require great cooperation among Arab countries and that Egypt and Syria are the nucleus of this cooperation.

Sidqi Departs 19 Dec

JN1912183493 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1740 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, 19 Dec (SANA)—Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi left Damascus this evening at the end of a four-day visit to Syria during which he headed the Egyptian side to the meetings of the Joint Syrian-Egyptian Higher Committee.

Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi led the group of those who saw him off at Damascus International Airport. Also present to see him off were the deputy prime ministers, ministers, the Syrian ambassador in Cairo, the Egyptian ambassador in Damascus, and the Egyptian embassy staff.

Paper Reports Israeli 'Readiness' To Withdraw

NC2012091393 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 15 Dec 93 p 2

[Excerpt] According to information received by AL-NAHAR, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad told President Ilyas al-Hirawi during their summit meeting in Damascus on Sunday [12 December] that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has conveyed to him Israeli readiness to withdraw from southern Lebanon and the Golan. The information adds that the Syrian side, however, asked about the way this withdrawal would be accomplished. The Syrian side asked if this withdrawal would be gradual or all at once. It voiced caution vis-a-vis this Israeli proposal, recalling its stand that the withdrawal must be comprehensive and that there will be no normalization before the implementation of full withdrawal.

The information indicates that the Syrian side attached importance to the summit meeting scheduled between U.S. President Bill Clinton and President al-Asad in Geneva in the middle of next month. This meeting, the Syrian side added, is bound to ensure a U.S. guarantee for the comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from the south and the Golan. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Criticized for Missing Accord Deadline

NC1812140493 Paris AFP in English 1358 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, Dec 18 (AFP)—Syria on Saturday [18 December] sharply criticized PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat for missing a deadline for an agreement on the details of an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"Israel is hypocritically playing for time and knows that 'Arafat will lay down his cards one after the other to achieve any gain to hold up to the Palestinian and Arab opposition," the official AL-THAWRAH daily said.

"Israel knew the PLO leader could no longer stop (his initiative) since surrender is a bottomless pit," the paper said. "So the game of blackmail began just when Arafat seemed defenseless."

'Arafat, it argued, was desperately trying to salvage the Israeli-Palestinian accord on limited autonomy for Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho signed September 13 in Washington, adding that his concessions would completely water down the deal.

"All the agreement's clauses will then be interpreted according to Israeli logic and not be subject to discussion," it said.

'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin failed to agree in Cairo last Sunday on the details of implementing Palestinian autonomy—which includes an Israeli withdrawal—by the December 13 deadline.

Israel then warned on Friday there would be no agreement to implement self-rule before 1994.

Palestinians 'Will Drown' in Separate Deal

JN1812145193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1237 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: While Zionist settlers escalate their aggressions against the Palestinian people in the occupied territory, recent events reveal new aspects of the Oslo accord. Israeli officials have said their army will have absolute control over borders, bridges, crossings, and checkpoints. They say their army will have the freedom to intervene in the self-rule areas. They say the Israeli military administration will remain the source of power in the occupied territory, even after the Palestinian elections there.

So, self-rule does not cover the territory or the people. The proposed Palestinian authority will only receive and carry out the occupation's instructions and plans.

The way the Israelis deal with the Palestinian party, which deviated from the constants of the Arab solution and signed the Oslo accord, clearly shows they intend to put more pressure on the Palestinian party in order to grab more concessions. In practical terms, this will empty the accord of any content, ignoring the fact that in the eyes of the Palestinian people the accord will then collapse. In reality, they want this so the accord will become a tool in their hands to strike at the Palestinian people and undermine their aspirations and ambitions.

The occupied territory today, more than before, is far from peace. Bargaining and settlements made in corridors can, in no way, lead to peace. Israel's practices and attempts to beautify separate deals clearly prove that firm, genuine peace is not in the plans of Israelis and that they focus their thinking on finding ways to devour as much of the occupied territory as they can.

The Israelis have dragged the Palestinian negotiating party to a point where it, along with the Palestinians, will drown. They pressured, and are pressuring, Jordan to conclude a separate deal. Although Jordan has announced many times through its officials that it will

not be dragged to such accords, the Israelis continue their attempts. Their objective is to besiege Syria.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has announced that Israel is interested in achieving peace with Syria. But, he also said that the problem is that Syria does not demonstrate the required flexibility. The leader of the Likud opposition has boasted that Syria's demand to restore the Golan in exchange for peace is not realistic and that Syria should take, instead of the Golan, external economic and technological assistance.

The plan is for Syria to give up the Golan and to offer, on top of that, peace to Israel. Once Syria gives up the Golan, Lebanon will have no hope of restoring the occupied south. There will be no hope for the Palestinians to ensure the expulsion of the Israeli Army and Zionist settlers from their territories.

This is the Israeli objective that lies behind the conclusion of separate deals. It wants to blackmail the Arab parties, one after another. It wants to cancel, in practice, the UN Security Council resolutions that form the basis of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

Instead of talks founded on the fundamentals of the Madrid conference, the resolutions of international legitimacy, and the land-for-peace principle, secret negotiations are being conducted here and there. Arabs are coming out of these negotiations as losers, in terms of territory, right, and dignity.

Although, as the Israelis have admitted, the Oslo agreement is in a real predicament, they did not lose hope of imposing their will on the Palestinian side so it would totally submit to their schemes. They did not stop simultaneously promoting separate deals and criticizing Syria.

Syria is a stumbling block for Israel's schemes. Their grudges intensified after the U.S. Secretary of State's recent tour of the region. They took into account the facts that Syria succeeded in convincing the United States of the need to seriously work for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and that Syria prevented Israel from creating new differences in Arab ranks. These practices do not serve the peace process in any way. Indeed, these practices thwart the serious efforts that are being exerted.

The shortest road to peace in the region is Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied territories and the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, not these twisted methods and deals that complicate the regional situation and add new problems on top of the many problems that are already here.

If peace is of real interest to the countries of the region, the United States, and the international community, then it is important to take the initiative and save the Middle East from Israeli maneuvering, putting it on the track toward real peace. This is done by consecrating UN Security Council resolutions and the land-for-peace principle as the only basis for the desired just and comprehensive peace, and by announcing, without any ambiguity, that peace is linked to Israel's full withdrawal, and that the entire international community is concerned about achieving this full withdrawal.

Press Predicts Failure of New Oslo Talks

JN1912084193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In a commentary today, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH addresses the Arab and Israeli positions toward the peace process, saying: Despite the optimism created by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent tour of the region over the prospects and future of the peace process, it is clear that the gap between the Arab and Israeli positions is still very wide, particularly with regard to substantive and basic issues regarding the mechanism of the solution to be reached, the terms of this solution, as well as its requirements.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The Israelis have not thus far made any goodwill gesture signalling a change in their tactics, which have been grounded in maneuvering and procrastination since the start of the peace process in Madrid. Besides, they have continued to make strenuous efforts to conclude separate solutions and deals, advancing distorted and erroneous interpretations of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, betraying an unwillingness on their part to accept the principle of complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories. As a matter of course, this means that the peace process still lacks many positive components which could ensure progress and success. This also means that this process is facing a big impasse that cannot be bypassed unless Israel effects drastic changes in its policy.

The paper goes on to say: If the international community wants this region to enjoy security and stability, it must create the circumstances conducive to the success of the peace process. It must create the objective circumstances that would allow this process to achieve its desired objectives. This is achievable only if there is a firm international position that would make Israel comply with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and accept the principle of complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Peace is an indivisible whole. It cannot be built in installments or over phases. It must be comprehensive; that is, it must be achieved on all fronts without exception. Moreover, it must be based on the principles of right and justice, particularly since it has become quite clear that the separate solutions promoted by Israel cannot bring true peace. As a matter of fact, it has been proven that such solutions are land mines that could scuttle the peace process.

TISHRIN newspaper deals with the Oslo agreement concluded between Israel and the PLO, saying: Since the announcement of the aforementioned agreement, it has been clear that each and every paragraph in this agreement requires fresh negotiations and an agreement, and that Israel will exploit this to evade the requirements of just and comprehensive peace as well as the issue of withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The paper adds: The Oslo agreement, which has failed to properly address Palestinian Arab rights, has exacerbated the regional situation. Worse still, it is a serious precedent that jeopardizes the entire peace process. This is because it was concluded in secret negotiations outside the Madrid formula and the terms of reference agreed upon for the peace process.

The paper goes on to say: All this was to Israel's advantage. Nonetheless, there are people who still believe that the agreement is still capable of being implemented, and that the new Oslo talks would ensure its implementation.

The paper says: All indications show that these talks will not produce anything basically different from the results of the previous secret Oslo negotiations. As a matter of fact, in these fresh negotiations, the Palestinians will be pressured into making more concessions in the interest of Israel and its continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Moreover, this will consecrate the relinquishment of Palestinian national rights.

TISHRIN adds: Three months have passed since the signing of the 13 September accord. The events and developments of these three months have confirmed that the peace process has experienced a serious setback, and that it has been derailed from the track it used when it was first launched, namely, the Madrid formula. Nonetheless, the Palestinians have not learned their lessons. They have not thus far reached the conclusion that the Oslo agreement is diametrically opposed to the Palestinian people's objectives and aspirations, and that it harmonizes with Israeli plans to maintain Israeli control over Arab territories.

Concluding its commentary, TISHRIN says: Syria, which has reiterated its adherence to the constants governing just and comprehensive peace, would like to reiterate that there can be no peace unless Israel effects a complete withdrawal from the occupied territories, which is the centerpiece of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the U.S. peace initiative, and the Madrid formula.

AL-BA'TH newspaper comments on the same issue, saying: The developments we have seen since 13 September, when the Gaza-Jericho accord was signed, have shown many things. Among other things, these developments have shown that Syria was correct when it urged the Arabs to safeguard their cohesion, and not to allow themselves to be dragged into partial and separate solutions, which Israel is promoting.

AL-BA'TH adds: The statement Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres made to the French newspaper LE MONDE yesterday is fresh evidence that Israel is opposed to true peace, and that it knows nothing other than the policy of maneuvering, deception, and procrastination. In that statement, Peres said that it is naive to believe that Israel could meet the deadlines enshrined in the Gaza-Jericho accord. To corroborate his argument in this regard, Peres quoted the original draft agreement the PLO leadership signed with Israel, as if he wanted to say that the agreement signed with the PLO is mere words that neither concern the territories, nor the population of these territories in any way whatsoever.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: Syria, which opened the doors for peace, will continue to relentlessly adhere to the principles and components of just peace, because it is fully convinced that true, just, and comprehensive peace will eventually be achieved in the correct way, and not as Israel wants.

Oslo Talks 'Undermine' Prospects for Peace

JN1912150393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1236 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] The Palestinian and Israeli sides have returned to Oslo to hold a new round of both secret and open talks after the failure of the Gaza-Jericho agreement and after it encountered a series of serious difficulties. Observers do not believe that the talks will lead to understanding unless the Palestinian side submits fully to all of Israel's demands. These demands deprive the Palestinians of their basic rights, entrench the occupation authority and the right to building settlements, and put the Palestinian side in a position hostile to the intifadah. Needless to say, this will not achieve peace or stability in the occupied territories, but will exacerbate the situation. Since the first day of the Oslo agreement, the Palestinians have reaped bitter fruits in terms of Israeli repression, an intensification of the siege, and the chasing of strugglers. Dozens of the sons of the Palestinian people fell victim to occupation bullets when the Zionist settlers mobilized their forces and wreaked havoc on Arab possessions. They burned houses, cars, and farms. They did not hesitate to kill Palestinians just for the sake of killing and of satisfying their fascist instincts.

Finding a way out of the labyrinths of the Oslo agreement cannot take place by returning to Oslo to hold separate secret talks. It must come by resorting to the bases of the Madrid conference and the Washington talks, and by adhering to the objective of a just and comprehensive peace on all fronts through the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions and the land-for-peace formula. The first round of Oslo talks were unsuccessful. The second round of talks is not expected to produce any true progress, regardless of attempts to peddle them and surround them with an aura of false propaganda. The defect lies in deviating from the

Madrid formula and the objective of a just and comprehensive peace in favor of separate deals that do not defuse the conflict, but further exacerbate it.

The Israelis believed that by persuading the Palestinian side to sign the Gaza-Jericho agreement in return for ambiguous promises and unclear principles, it could turn the situation upside down in the region, lift the Arab boycott, and force several Arab states to normalize their relations with Israel. They did not succeed in any of their expectations or schemes. In fact, since the signing of the agreement, the occupied territories have witnessed the most violent confrontations ever. This is because the Palestinians have seen for themselves that the agreement is basically aimed at encroaching on their rights, aspirations, and hopes, and at destroying the intifadah. It is not a coincidence or a gesture of courtesy to see that the United States, supported by the international community, has moved to reactivate other tracks of negotiations, and announced, through Secretary Christopher, that the objective of the peace process is to achieve a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East. He also announced that there is no alternative to reinforcing peace efforts on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and that Syria's role in the peace process is a basic and extremely important role. It is also no coincidence that the Israeli prime minister has openly admitted that peace with Syria is essential for the success of the peace process. However, words are one thing, and deeds are another. Israel has thus far not respected any of the bases of the Madrid conference or the UN Security Council resolutions. It still hopes to circumvent genuine Arab rights and to continue its occupation of Arab territories. The occupied territories are not a subject for any compromise just as peace itself cannot be divided.

Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved through maneuvering, deception, and delusion, but is based on a host of clear and frank principles—the foremost of which is Israel's withdrawal from all of the Golan Heights and the other occupied territories. There is no alternative to sincere dealing, for the setting of ambushes and traps, giving erroneous interpretation of peace and UN resolutions, and adhering to weak security pretexts, will not hasten the achievement of peace. It will undermine its prospects and put true peace beyond reach. The incidents in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and the failure of the Oslo agreement should encourage all those who are faithful to the peace process to do serious work to entrench the formula of a just and comprehensive peace, peace that eliminates occupation, injustice, and coercion, and opens the doors of stability and prosperity in the Middle East.

Afghanistan

Hilal Resumes Duties as First Deputy Premier

BK2012101893 Hong Kong AFP in English 0955 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Kabul, Dec 20 (AFP)—Qutubuddin Hilal resumed his reposibilities Monday as first Afghan deputy prime minister, ending speculation of a party coup against prime minister Golboddin Hekmatyar triggered by his 50-day absence from Kabul.

Hilal, who said he was on an official mission to Pakistan, told reporters that acting deputy premier Qazi Amin had handed over the office to him without any delay.

The party's number two, Hilal had left amid fighting in Tagob, 70 kilometres (43 miles) east of the capital, when the state's security forces started a campaign against members of Hekmtyar's Hezb-e Eslami faction.

Some 100 high-ranking Hezb members were detained during the operation.

During his absence, Hilal was replaced by second deputy premier Arsala Rahmani who, after a brief stay, left for Sudan to attend an Islamic conference.

Hekmatyar, who prefers to stay at the eastern Hezb base of Charasiab, appointed his deputy, Waqaad, as acting deputy prime minister. [passage omitted]

Security Officials Capture Quantity of Weapons

LD1812145393 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1430 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] An quantity of heavy weapons were captured by security officials while they were being taken out of the city by members of Golboddin Hekmatyar's party. A military correspondent of the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY reports the weapons included a BM1 [rocket launcher], one piece of 82mm artillery, one piece of 75mm artillery, and three mortars that were captured in the area of Pol-e Charkhi by national security officials.

Troops Capture Missile in Kabul

LD1812151293 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1430 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Officials of Kabul garrison and the National Islamic Movement captured one (Sterela 2) antiaircraft missile in the area of Maiwand Wat [near President Rabbani's palace]. BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY'S military correspondent reports that the missile was captured today during an operation to clear the Maiwand Wat area of irresponsible armed men. The operation has been conducted for some time by the country's security forces.

India

Officials, Others Comment on GATT Agreement

Rao Defends Approval of GATT

BK1712160093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister says India cannot avoid multilateral trade and his government has done the best thing possible by approving the GATT arrangement. Mr. Narasimha Rao said but for the sustained efforts by India and a few other developing countries, the contents of the GATT deal would have been worse. Addressing the meeting of the Congress-I parliamentary party in New Delhi today, he said even at the last moment, the developing countries got some concessions which were particularly beneficial to India. The meeting discussed the Dunkel proposals for nearly two hours. Mr. Narasimha Rao explained to the members the efforts made by India along with Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and some other countries in bringing about changes in the original proposals in favor of the developing nations. He recalled that for the first round of talks, the then prime minister, late Rajiv Gandhi, had sent a high-level delegation which included the then finance minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, and leaders like Mr. K.C. Pant.

Dispelling the doubts of some members, the commerce minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, said the GATT arrangement fully recognizes the government's right to protect the interests of farmers. Mr. Mukherjee made it clear that what happened at Geneva was only the conclusion of negotiations. These will be referred to the group of ministers in April next for their consideration. Their recommendations will then go to the member countries which will have a year's time to ratify them.

Commerce Minister Defends GATT

BK1812162493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The commerce minister has said that the balance of advantage as a result of the just-concluded Uruguay round of talks is in India's favor. Talking to newspersons in New Delhi today, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee said it will not only boost exports but will also result in overall growth. He said the general expansion of world trade due to lowering of tariffs will enhance the country's exports between $1.5 and $2 billion per annum. The agreement, he said, also provides benefits of a multilateral trading system and special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries.

Referring to criticism that GATT is against India's interest, the commerce minister said all the points of a particular country cannot be met in a multilateral arrangement. Mr. Mukherjee asserted that bilateral arrangement is not better compared to a multilateral system. He said for the first time textile sector has been recognized and a (?finite) timeframe of 10 years has been

agreed upon to phase out textile import quotas. Replying to questions, the commerce minister said clubbing of product and nonproduct agricultural subsidies will allow much greater flexibility to provide subsidies for agricultural production. He said adoption of international standards and intellectual property rights, IPR, protection will enhance flow of foreign drug investment and technology. The commerce minister said while providing for plant breeders' rights, farmers and researchers' rights can be protected under the suigeneris system to be adopted by the country.

The CPI [Communist Party of India] general secretary, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, has said that by accepting the Dunkel proposals on multilateral trade, the government has opened Indian markets to multinationals, which should make Indian industry uncompetitive.

The Janata Dal leader, Professor Madhu Dandavate, has said that the GATT will become a self-regulating treaty once the government of India signed it.

Minister Comments on Drug Prices

BK1912144893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The union minister for chemicals and fertilizer, Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, has said that GATT 93 will not have any impact on the drug prices in the country. Talking to newspersons at Madgaon in Goa today, he said 10 years transition period is permitted to India drug and manufacturers industry to switch over to product patent. [sentence as heard] He said in view of the GATT 93 it has become imperative to strengthen research and development program in the country. Mr. Faleiro announced that government will very soon start a dialogue with the pharmaceuticals industry, research institutions, and the government in this regard.

Trade Bodies Welcome GATT

BK1812033493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, FICCI, has welcomed the Dunkel proposal saying that it is by and large good. The FICCI president, Dr. (Bansi Dhar), told newspersons in Calcutta yesterday that the Dunkel proposal is going to do good to India and its industries. He said export prospects will get a boost. Dr. (Bansi Dhar) said that the government should allow the industry full freedom to act and said that the union finance minister needs to take dramatic action to stimulate the economic growth in the country.

The president of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations, FIEO, has expressed happiness on the conclusion of the Uruguay round of GATT. He said the development heralds a new era of global trade. According to an FIEO release in New Delhi today, the total global trade is expected to rise by 200 billion dollars as a result of this agreement. India's exports, especially of agricultural products and merchandise, are expected to go up considerably in addition to the normal growth envisaged, he added.

BJP Adopts Resolution

BK1912155493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] National Executive has concluded its deliberations on the party's setback in the recent assembly elections. In a note to the meeting, the party president, Mr. L. K. Advani, admitted that the image of the BJP governments in Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh was negative. He said this cost the party dearly in both the states. He, however, claimed that the electoral reverses were not a setback to the BJP ideology.

On the second day of its two-day meeting in New Delhi today, the BJP Executive adopted a resolution on the Dunkel Draft issue. It asked the government not to ratify the agreement without the approval of parliament. Briefing reporters, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee said India should reconsider its stand on the issue if its efforts to secure changes in the draft agreement fail.

Replying to a question, the BJP leader indicated that the party may call off its boycott of parliament tomorrow. He said the National Executive meeting discussed the matter, but left the final decision to the parliamentary party, which is meeting tomorrow morning.

Commentary Hails Benefits

BK1812050993 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Commentary by A.K. Bhattacharya]

[Text] The conclusion of the Uruguay round of talks and India's agreement to the new multilateral framework proposed under it have quite expectedly evoked sharp protests from the opposition parties. There is, however, no good reason why such protests should last for long. Whatever doubts the critics of the Uruguay round may have had should have been removed by the statements made by the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, and the commerce minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee.

Since the Uruguay round of GATT will put in place a multilateral trade framework, India could not have possibly walked out of these talks. Any such drastic step would have isolated India and subjected it to, perhaps, a more stringent bilateral trade framework. This is what the prime minister explained to his colleagues in the Congress parliamentary party yesterday. In his statements in parliament in the last two days, the commerce minister also gave a detailed analysis of the impact of the Uruguay round on Indian industry and trade. For instance, he claimed that the Uruguay round will result in a significant expansion in world trade, and India will consequently be in a position to enhance its annual export by one to two billion dollars over and above the

normal growth. For a country like India, whose medium-term balance of payments prospects depend critically on a higher export growth, the Uruguay round should indeed be treated as a harbinger of good news.

There can be only one explanation for the manner in which opposition political parties have protested against the Uruguay round, and there is possibly a great deal of misunderstanding of the issues involved. For example, as Mr. Mukherjee explained the Uruguay round does not force India to reduce its subsidy in agriculture. The proposed framework will allow India to raise its agricultural subsidy from the current negative level to 10 percent of total agricultural produce. Subsidies under the public distribution system for rural and urban poor are outside the scope of GATT. Similarly, the interests of farmers and farm researchers will be safeguarded under the new framework. On the controversial drug patent's issue, India has obtained a 10-year period during which it has to introduce product patents covering drugs. Fears of a sharp rise in drug prices are a little misplaced since the Indian Government can always use the licensing or price control measures to both augment drug supplies and keep prices under check. On the textile front, the quantitative curbs imposed by developed countries on exports from developing countries like India will be lifted after 10 years and not 15 years as feared earlier. On the whole, the Uruguay round promises to offer more benefits to India than any other alternative course of action.

Forces Arrest 'Militant' Leader in Kashmir

BK1912160693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] In Kashmir Valley, security forces today had a major breakthrough in arresting the chief of the Muslim-i-Mujahidin [name as heard] militant outfit, Ehsan Dar, along with his deputy and three other militants. The director general of police, Mr. M.N. Sabharwal, told AIR [All India Radio] Jammu correspondent that the arrests were made following a raid on a hideout. Ehsan Dar was formerly the head of Hizbul Mujahidin and had broken off from this outfit some time ago. He is the third chief of a militant outfit arrested or killed in Kashmir during the last one week. Earlier, acting chief of Hizbul Mujahidin, Shamsul Haq, and chief of Al-Jihad, Jamal Afghani, were killed in encounters.

The state governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, has given instructions to security forces to prevent any kind of human rights violation and warned that stern action would be taken against those found guilty. Addressing a meeting of senior officers in Jammu today, Gen. Rao said all precautions will be taken to check the entry of militants into the Harratbal shrine, especially in view of the failure of the shrine management to do so in the past.

Governor Promises 'Pressure' on 'Militants'

BK1912083493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The J and K [Jammu and Kashmir] governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, said the government cannot compromise the security of the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar in view of the ineffectiveness of the management in preventing the entry of militants into the shrine. Addressing a Hill Development Board meeting in Jammu yesterday, he said the government will continue to put pressure on militants without alienating the people. The governor urged Kashmiri leaders to return to the valley and attend to the needs of the people.

Islamabad TV Reports on Events in Kashmir

BK1812144693 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, general strike continued on the third day today as a mark of mourning for Chief Commander Shamshul Haq and Commander Jamal Afghani, martyred by Indian troops the other day. Thousands of people attended the burial ceremony of Commander Afghani, who was laid to rest at Kulosa in Bandipura. Chief Commander Shamshul Haq is being laid to rest later today. Reports say five Indian soldiers were killed and many others wounded when mojahedin launched an attact on Makan microwave station in the southern part of the held valley. Those killed included two officers of the Indian Army. Mojahedin, who suffered two casualties, also captured various weapons. After the attack, Indian troops cordoned off the entire area and launched house-to-house search. According to reports, another two Indian soldiers were killed and nine injured when mojahedin launched a grenade attack on occupying forces in Dareshkadal area of Srinagar. After the attack, Indian Army this morning laid a siege arond Rambagh, Natipura, and Nowgong areas. Residents of the area were ordered out of their houses and made to stand in biting cold for identification and several of them were arrested. Meanwhile, curfew continued in Kishtwar. Clashes have also been reported from Badgam and Doda areas.

Pakistan Accused of Human Rights Violations

BK1712120393 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Commentary by Shyamal Ved]

[Text] Asia Watch of the United States and Amnesty International of London have recently reported on the condition of human rights in Pakistan. But while doing so, they have omitted to mention what really constitutes the source of human rights violations in that country. If they probe a little further, they will find that the motive force behind all human rights violations is the misuse of what the rulers of that country call the ideology. This misuse was more glaring than ever before during General

Ziaul Haq's military dictatorship. Pakistan is still smarting under the practices left behind by his rule.

This misuse or exploitation of the ideology is on two levels—domestic and international. What Asia Watch and Amnesty International have reported is only a part of the problem at the domestic level; that is, shabby treatment of Hindus, Christians, Ahmedias, and the people of the minority provinces who have been demanding justice and equal rights as citizens of Pakistan.

What these human rights agencies fight shy of admitting is that the present deterioration in the field of human rights started during Gen. Zia's rule when Pakistan was fighting the United States' war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union. Zia ruled by banning political parties; imposing censorship on newspapers; chaining courts; and above all, encouraging religious fundamentalism, which brooked no rights for women, minorities, and other weaker sections. Human rights bodies were not moved by this state of affairs because Zia then was the dear friend of the West. These bodies were also not much moved by the way deposed Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's trial was being managed by Zia and the way he was executed.

While fanning fundamentalism, he was also exploiting Pakistan's ideology—with the support of obscurantist parties and groups—to suppress not only religious minorities and women but all opposition to his rule. The grateful West at the same time was trying to project him as the leader of the Muslim world.

Denial of human rights has even been institutionalized by the Pakistani Constitution, which treats minorities as outside of the mainstream of the country's social and political life. The Constitution provides that no non-Muslim can become the president or prime minister of Pakistan and that the minorities will have their separate constituencies. Thus they have been reduced to political nonentities. The laws which operate against Ahmedias and the Christians are also the product of the very same ideology. These laws do not allow Ahmedias to practice their faith. Then there is a law which prescribes death penalty for anyone who says anything derogatory against the prophet. There were cases of some people being caught or even killed for allegedly committing this crime. This ideology also operates against the Shia Muslims. The Sunni extremist organization called Sipah-i-Sahaba is its product. It is responsible for anti-Shia riots throughout Pakistan and also in the northern areas of Kashmir.

What is happening in Kashmir is the international manifestation of this ideology. On the strength of this ideology, Pakistani rulers claim that without Kashmir their country is incomplete, and that—in the eyes of the Pakistanis—justifies the country's support to terrorists in Kashmir. These terrorists have killed thousands of innocent Kashmiris, looted their property and raped their women, and driven many thousand Muslim and Hindu Kashmiris to wander as refugees in other states.

But the human rights organizations have chosen to ignore this aspect of human rights violations. On the contrary, they are very quick to speak for the rights of the terrorists and condemn those who at the cost of their own lives try to defend innocent citizens against these trigger-happy terrorists. These organizations, like the babes in the woods, allow themselves to be swayed by the propaganda of the very country which is responsible for these human rights violations.

Lastly, this ideology is now being applied to the country's nuclear program, too, by linking it to the Kashmir issue. The way it is being publicized in Pakistan it is very clear that Islamabad rulers want it to become another emotive issue. The American senators who recently visited Pakistan to persuade the rulers to roll back their nuclear program were frankly told no. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Asif Ali said that if the Americans continued with their ban on economic and military supplies, his country would look for other sources of weapons.

PRC Military Delegation Arrives for 6-Day Visit

BK1812160693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] A high-level Chinese military delegation led by the vice chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army, Lieutenant General Xu Huizi, has arrived in New Delhi today on a six-day goodwill visit. The delegation will call on the minister of state for defense, Mr. Mallikarjun, and hold discussions with the chiefs of the army, navy, and air force. It will also visit a number of defense training institutes. A Defense Ministry spokesman said today that the visit of the high-level Chinese delegation after a gap of about 30 years aims at fostering confidence-building measures between the defense forces of the two countries.

Meets With Military Leaders

BK2012092893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The visiting high-level military delegation from China held discussions on issues of mutual interest with the vice chief of Army staff, Lieutenant General Surender Nath, in New Delhi today. The delegation led by the vice chief of general staff of the People's Liberation Army, Lieutenant General Xu Huizi, also called on the chief of naval staff, Admiral V.S. Shekhawat, and the chief of the air staff, Air Chief Marshal S.K. Kaul. The delegation, which arrived in New Delhi on Saturday last, is currently on a six-day goodwill visit to India.

Indo-Chinese Joint Business Council Meeting Held

BK1812054293 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] The Indo-Chinese Joint Business Council held its meeting in New Delhi today. Mr. Li Lanqing, the vice premier of China, led the Chinese side. Both the sides

emphasized the need to increase the bilateral trade and explore the possibilities of joint venture to take advantages of economy's upscale. An overview of the decisions taken in the last joint council meeting were also done. New items for trade were identified.

Iran

President Addresses Students, Theologians

LD1812153693 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in English 1430 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] The week marking unity among universities and theology schools began throughout Iran today with a speech by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in a gathering of university students, professors, and theologians in Tehran.

Pointing to the link between theologians and masses of people, President Rafsanjani said arrogant powers wish to weaken Iran more than any other country in the world, but despite these attempts the Islamic republic system continues to move in the right path and overcome various problems.

Referring to various conspiracies hatched against Iran by enemies of Islam, the president noted that the country is moving rapidly toward progress.

Elsewhere, President Rafsanjani said the country's universities are making efforts to expand and strengthen both the quantity and quality of education with regard to the policies set by the late Imam Khomeyni and confirmed by the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khamene'i.

The president in conclusion reiterated that an atmosphere of political tension is to the detriment of no one [as heard] and that research and scientific work should be followed up through peace and order.

Blames 'Global Arrogance' for Oil Prices

LD1812153893 Tehran IRNA in English 1506 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 18, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said here today that the global arrogance was behind falling oil prices in a desperate attempt to exert more pressure upon Islamic Iran.

In a meeting with university students on the anniversary of unity between universities and seminaries, he referred to the efforts made by the world arrogance to undermine the Islamic revolution.

The massive presence of the people in the arena has thwarted these plots, he said.

Pointing to the great turn-out of mourners in the funeral ceremony of the late Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Golpaygani last week, he said it indicated the deep-rooted sympathy of the people with Islam and the religious leaders.

He said security and stability in the country was the result of people's vigilance and coordination emanating from Islamic teachings. The resources of the country are used appropriately despite all obstacles created by the global arrogance, he said.

Responding to a question posed by a student on economic cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States, he said it was limited and had nothing to do with political issues.

Favors 'Limited Economic Ties' With U.S.

NC1912125593 Paris AFP in English 1102 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec 19 (AFP)—Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani has said he favors limited economic ties with the United States, despite the political problems between the two countries, newspapers said here Sunday [19 December].

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, addressing a group of students from universities and schools of theology Saturday, said Tehran and Washington were engaged in "limited economic cooperation" independent of political issues, the SALAM newspaper said.

"We should not allow our ties with American corporations to be broken, since a major part of our industry still relies on American technology," he said, quoted by the daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI. "But we must be careful to reduce the dependency."

The president said the United States indirectly purchased Iranian oil while Iran imported certain U.S. commodities, according to JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI.

Tehran and Washington severed diplomatic ties after radical students took U.S. diplomats and other embassy staff hostage in Tehran in November 1979 following the Islamic revolution.

Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i last month called U.S. statesmen "dictators" and ruled out any chance of mending fences with the United States.

Washington has called for fundamental policy changes in Iran before a resumption of ties.

However, the two countries have stepped up trade in recent years, with Iran spending 600 to 700 million dollars on U.S. products in 1992, according to Western economic sources.

The bulk of the goods are re-exports from the United Arab Emirates and a small portion is imported through intermediaries in Europe, the sources said.

The United States was among the few countries in 1993 to increase trade with Iran, which has been facing grave financial problems in the past year, they said.

Coca-Cola has made a comeback in Iran and U.S. products made a strong showing at a Tehran fair for the first time since the revolution.

The display of U.S. industrial and household goods at the fair in October prompted opposition from Islamic hardliners demanding a total severance of bilateral ties.

On Saturday the official Iranian news agency said Hashemi-Rafsanjani also blamed "global arrogance" for falling oil prices, accusing Western powers of trying to put more pressure on Iran.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani told the students that the country's resources were being used "appropriately, despite all the obstacles created by global arrogance."

World oil prices have dipped to their lowest level in five years over the past few weeks.

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) said the fall was due to excess output by independent producers and the possibility of a resumption of supplies by Iraq, still banned from exporting oil under the U.N. embargo imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

On Wednesday the Iranian currency, the rial, reached an all-time low on the open market, having lost 11 percent of its value against major currencies in four days.

Khamene'i Urges Political Activity in Schools

LD1912122593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2130 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Excerpt] A cultural-political activity charter for the branches of the Office of the Esteemed Leader's Representatives at Universities, [OELRU], that has the approval of his holiness Ayatollah Khamene'i is at the final stages of confirmation.

Announcing this, the OELRU head, Mr. Sadr told reporters: Since the current political and cultural process at universities is not to the approval of the esteemed leadership, changes have been made to certain articles of the charter, and they are in their final stages of confirmation in the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution. Based on these changes a new council of representatives has been introduced.

The new charter envisions the goals of OELRU, strengthening of the moral climate at universities, responsibilities of the clergy at guiding students in affairs of religious beliefs, explanation of political affairs, and issues of political analysis toward improving the university climates.

Among the other responsibilities of the office are: strengthening responsible Muslim forces, supporting Islamic associations at universities according to the approvals provided by the esteemed leader, and transferring responsibilities in the scientific, managerial, and educational fields to the above forces.

In an interview with our reporter, Mr. Sadr spoke on the significance of unity between universities and theological schools, the OELRU responsibilities, and strengthening of political associations. [passage omitted]

Interpretation of Khamene'i Remarks Questioned

NC1912075593 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 8 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] In the last one or two days, we have witnessed interviews and talks in which officials have striven to interpret and explain the exhortations of the leader [Khamene'i] in a particular manner.

For example, it is being said that students should not air their personal or collective opinions on political issues but that they should also not be indifferent to the political issues around them. What does this mean? If they are not supposed to air their personal opinions or those of the faction they are affiliated with, what does being indifferent or not imply? Is this not—in diplomatic parlance—a way of distorting the utterances of the leader?

At another university, a student asked why the present enrollment form is opposed to the remarks of the leader, especially with regard to political activity? The form asks the student to pledge that, according to a particular clause, he or she will not indulge in [political] activity. Why has there not been a satisfactory explanation for this change or amendment?

Why does an official tell the correspondent: I do not have any particular opinion, and I concur with what the leader has said; but then, over the course of his remarks, projects his apprehension over the political activities of students?

It appears that a slow and internal move is in progress to mutilate the decrees of the leader—through miscellaneous explanations and interpretations—and to keep the actual substance closed or under wraps.

We hope that in these days our dear students will prove—by their serious presence at the question and answer sessions and by asking firm and key questions—their strong determination to be present on the political scene and will strive, more than ever, for the open atmosphere necessary for their activities at the universities.

Yazdi Views 'Sources of Emulation' in Sermon

LD1712235193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1131 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Second Friday prayers sermon delivered by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi in Tehran on 17 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted]

There are a few topics in this sermon which I will deal with as time allows. Now the first issue: As we are all aware, one week has passed since the passing away of the great source of emulation, His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani. [Crowd chants Salavat prayer, praise to prophet Muhammad and his family]

We have all witnessed the noble people of Iran paying their respects to that honorable source of emulation. We all witnessed the moment when the person who holds the position of the guardianship, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, heard that his eminence was ill and had been taken to hospital; he visited his eminence in hospital; the president visited him in hospital.

God Almighty took away that great personality from the Islamic ummah, and the people of Tehran held a great funeral procession, and the guardian of the cause himself appeared among the people. The people of Qom also paid him much respect. Mourning ceremonies were held throughout the country and people paid their respects. [passage omitted]

Any person who attended the funeral procession will be rewarded in the hereafter and has also influenced political calculations. It has constantly been displayed to the world that the relationship between the majority of our people and the spiritual leaders and the source of emulation is a sincere one, and various ordinary issues of social life and traumas do not weaken that relationship. The world and our enemies make various calculations for themselves and utter remarks here and there saying that people have become such and such, they are removed from their spiritual leaders and have no contact with their spiritual leaders. Then you see that such an incident [Golpayegani's death] takes place, and an honorable person passes away; people are granted so many blessings in their lives, and it also provides a reply and a strong smack in the mouth to the enemies of Islam. [passage omitted]

The issue of unity among seminaries and universities is one of those issues on which we heard the supreme jurisconsult's complete and elucidatory remarks. We heard the president's remarks. The various debates concerning this issue, the seminars which have been convened and the sessions that have been and are being held are often, at least in part, reported by the media, as we have heard. I referred to this briefly once before. If we make an assessment of all the debates that have been carried out on the issue—what is the meaning of unity among seminaries and universities: Unity of aim, as some have said; unity of method, as some have said; unity of form, and uniform, as some have even put in their official statements; unity of planning and curriculum, as has been thought of by some. What is unity? What must we pursue so that we end with unity?

Fortunately the statements by the high officials of the state have clarified the issue. I say that until the day the universities accept that in seminaries divine inspiration and prayer are one of the proofs of understanding; until the day the universities accept that the criteria of theology are different from those of the empirical sciences, unity will not be practicable. Until those in universities, whether lecturers or students or managers, accept the idea of divine inspiration and prayer in religious affairs, universities will not come close to seminaries. And until the day when seminaries accept that the current studies of empirical science in universities are necessary for the the management of the communal life of the people, and that those sciences must be researched, surveyed, assessed, implemented and put into practice—until the day the seminaries, also, accept that argument, they have not come close to universities.

Sitting side by side, listening together to one speaker and being by each other's side in a session will not create that unity. The universities must accept that the Koran and sunna are immutable documents. The seminaries must accept that empirical science and practical experience are tools without which life cannot be managed. If those two conditions—I am giving you my personal view—pertain in universities and seminaries, naturally those gatherings and debates can, God willing, reach a good result. We are pleased that these days, under these circumstances, thank God, it can be said that an overwhelming majority of our university people are religious, believing, and committed. They have accepted the ideas of prayer and shari'a from the seminaries and the clerics. It can also be said that an overwhelming majority of seminarians, especially the young generation of seminarians, have accepted that university sciences must be supported and attention paid to them in practice and in life. God willing, if there are details here and there, they will be reformed little by little and, God willing, we will reach that desired, complete unity among seminaries and universities. [passage omitted]

We all witnessed that following the demise of Grand Ayatollah Kho'i, religious authorities offered the interpretation that the two great ayatollahs—that is Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani and Grand Ayatollah Araki—could be or must be emulated. The people were thus guided, shown the way, and there were no problems.

After the demise of Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani, they repeated a section of those same remarks and they did not say anything new. They said that Grand Ayatollah Araki could be or must be emulated. That is correct in its own right. It is what had been said before and is now being repeated. It is not something new.

I would like to raise the following matter. First the issue is one of understanding not of proof. That is: One has to take some criteria into account. What are the criteria that must be taken into consideration regarding a source of emulation? It is clear that there is no place here for a meticulous academic and technical debate. But all our people have heard some religious accounts so many times that they know them by heart. [passage omitted]

I want to move the debate on from being a debate by a seminarian and make it more general. Those religious accounts—which we all know—say that a source of emulation must first be a jurisconsult. We all know what jurisconsult means. It means that he must be capable of understanding God's edicts; be capable of discerning and extracting secondary issues from principles. Naturally this capacity, this power and talent to distinguish and discern is for giving answers to secondary problems that the people face in their religious and worldly affairs and need answers for. That is his power of religious jurisprudence. Naturally the sciences on which the path to that state depend, are, as we all know, principles, literature, interpretation, etc, etc, which are attended to in seminaries.

Next after being a jurisconsult, he must be pious. He must have piety, must give up desire, and must not seek position and status. His inner state must be such that he must distance himself from the world.

After piety comes justice. All of us know the meaning of justice; it has been debated and discussed many times. We all know what just means. [passage omitted]

The next issue is that of awareness of the contemporary age. That is: The source of emulation must be someone who recognizes the times, understands the times. In the words of our departed imam, may God be satisfied with him, he must understand the times and the place. That is: It does not mean that he should know what day it is or what month or what year or what week. He should know what state the world is in; what state the people are in; who are friends, who are foes; the extent of the state's resources; should recognize the social, economic, cultural and military conditions of the state; know the status of all Muslims; know the status of the enemies of Muslims so that when problems arise...[sentence as heard] [passage omitted]

What does the phrase, events happen, mean? I have talked sometimes about a housewife preparing food in the kitchen and her hand is cut with a knife and she bleeds. Is the question one of cleanliness or otherwise of the blood, or blood getting into the food, the cleanliness or otherwise of the rice before or after being boiled? Is it an event that must be referred to a source of emulation? Or is it a simple problem concerning divine edicts, a common problem? Events happen means war and peace. Events happen means relations with a certain country and severing relations with a certain country. Events happen means whether to obtain a loan from foreigners and the World Bank or not when under economic pressure. Events happen means to confer with this or that for economic adjustment and to find a solution, or not to confer and not to seek a solution, and to tell the people to endure the pressure. Events happen means those kind of problems. Naturally those kind of problems cannot be answered by a jurisconsult unless he is aware of the times.

Awareness of the current age therefore is an issue which we interpret to be another measure. Besides being a juriconsult, pious, just, of good lineage and in accord with the relevant treaties, he has to have an awareness of the current age so as to manage the Islamic community and society. Up to here there is no argument and it seems that there is no one with a contradictory view. The practical method and tradition of Islamic scholars in the great theological schools—before the establishment of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran—was that when one or a number of sources of emulation died, the scholars of the next grade, who were all sources of emulation themselves, would get together and debate the issue. History has shown that one of the debates would be to determine which scholar had the greatest managerial capability. They would say: This gentleman is more scholastic and better at teaching, but loses his temper quickly and is unable to manage the theological school. But the other is very patient, with great capacity and does not lose his temper although he might not be as scholastic as the other. So it is best that he should accept the responsibility. As we have been told, this was the tradition on a number of occasions, following the death of Akhund Seyyed Yazdi, maybe sometime after Mirza-e Shirazi, and more recently at the time of the late Esfehani.

There is one thing that I want to add, which is my personal view and I wish to emphasize it: The issue changes before and after the establishment of the sovereigty of Islamic government. In a situation where Islam has no sovereignty there would be no difficulty if there were various sources of emulation in Esfehan, Shiraz, Kerman, Ahvaz, Mashhad, with each having absolute domination, being both sources of emulation and rule. History has shown and we have had similar cases on many occasions. But in a situation where Islam has sovereignty, after more than 1,000 and several hundred years, during which Islam had a condemned presence...[pauses] When we look at the more than 1,000 years of history, Islam was always under the thumb of governments, and the great scholars always fought and guarded Islam—the very debate that I introduced about the imamate in my first sermon. But Islam was always condemned. We have not forgotten that more recently in this country Islam was limited to a few mosques. Praying was a source of shame in a place like an airport, a train station or other public halls. People were ashamed to pray. It was impossible to implement Islamic laws. It was impossible for anyone to even speak about the implementation of Islamic laws. There is no time for discussion.

In books by great personalities of Islam, when they come to various debates, such as holy war, they say that since the issue does not apply the debate will be left aside. I do not want to name names. When they get to the debate on the judiciary, they say that since it is not possible to use it much, there is no need to debate it. It is in their books and you can look. In a situation when Islam has no sovereignty there would be no problem if there were 10, 20 or 30 great scholars in this or that city or country. There would be no problem. But now Islam, which had

been condemned for over a thousand years, has became sovereign under the leadership of Imam Khomeyni, may he be admitted to God's paradise, and we have reached a point where the imam said: Guarding Islam, guarding the sovereignty of Islam, is a binding necessity. In such a situation, where guarding Islam is a binding necessity, the issue takes on a different color and has to be debated differently. I ask: What is the meaning of self-accountability and keeping religiousness? [question in Arabic] Does this mean personal religiousness? There is already self-accountability, meaning one who guards his spirituality. Obviously once this has been done, personal religion will be safe. Why do you interpret, much like a commoner or a market trader, keeping religiousness to mean that there should be no mundane behavior such as lying or bickering. Religion has to be guarded, and the duties of scholars differ in conditions where Islam is sovereign from where it is not sovereign.

When the issue is awareness of the age, I have a question. As I said, the gentlemen should study this. Is awareness of the age an issue like jurisprudence, piety and justice, or is it like jurisprudential, pious and just? This makes a great difference in the debate. If you say that awareness of the age has an essential nature, and is exactly like jurisprudence, piety and justice, and that the official condition for being the source of emulation is awareness of the age, then the issues will be of less or more of an obstruction. But if you say that it means a preference, or it is jurisprudential and just, then the issue would be different. Here I am talking about measurements, criteria and tools of measurement. So if someone is more pious, more just and more of a jurisconsult, but fails to understand the simplest social and political issues of the Islamic community, should he be the source of emulation for the Islamic community? This is my question.

They think they have been very clever—those who say they will distinguish between the issues. I think this is a totally wrong path. They say: We will ask the political questions of one person and ask nonpolitical questions of another. Is it possible to divide the source of emulation? Even if it were so, it would definitely be wrong to say that political enquiries should be put to a knowledgeable political jurisconsult while enquiries regarding matters of worship will be put to a knowledgeable nonpolitical juriconsult. This division goes back the question of the separation of religion and politics.

There is another technical point. The political jurisconsult and scholar does not differ from a nonpolitical juriconsult on the matter of issuing a fatwa. A fatwa is different from a law. A leader has two modes: One is a jurisconsult and has fatwas, the other is a manager and issues orders. But laws are based on and made from fatwas. It would be wrong for you to say that political and nonpolitical issues should be put on different sides. This would be a separation of religion and politics. Why do I say that it is wrong? I even tell theological schools that it is wrong. Because theological schools do not accept that according to one jurisconsult fasting and prayers should be followed, and according to another, *pilgrimage and holy war. If there is to be a division, if* religious issues and nonreligious issues are to be followed according to different juriconsults, then on matters of fasting and prayer we will have to refer to the jurisconsult who might have worked hard on matters of fasting and prayer, and to refer to another who might have worked hard on issues of pilgrimage. This is not acceptable to theological schools and jurisconsults. And the issue could even apply to more detailed issues. One jurisconsult might be very strong and a specialist in matters of ablution, but might be weak, for instance, on the matter of defects [Arabic: khalal]. The division that you speak about has not been referred to by any jurisconsult; therefore it is not correct. There should be more research. My time is finished and I should bring my talk to a conclusion. This was a debate on meaning and proof, but I should add a word on the debate about the application.

I wish to say that among all the jurisconsults whom I know, with whom I am familiar—and I am not an ignorant person—of whose ability to understand I am aware, and all of whom I regard as faqih—just and pious—I say that the esteemed leader [Khamene'i] is the most qualified compared to all his peers and his equals with regard to his awareness of the requirements of time, management ability, administrative skills, and the ability to understand the issues and affairs of the time. [Crowd chants slogans, including "Khamene'i is the leader"]

Please let me continue. The time is short and there is another issue which is approrpiate to this discussion which I must add, as well as one other religious issue. The esteemed leader who was chosen by the Assembly of Experts and Islamic scholars of the country, and who has been given the responsibility for managing the country, meaning that he possesses the requirements...[pauses] Please pay attention, possessing the actual ability is one issue; having the potential and possibility is another. The experts from throughout the country who chose him were the jurisconsults, the ulema, Islamic scholars who could distiniguish the standards and requirements. Can one choose just anyone as the leader. The first requirement is to be a faqih. To be a faqih means to be qualified as a source of emulation. The esteemed leader is among the greatest jurisconsults. Other preconditions, such as justice, piety, and other issues are also very clear, and awareness of the age is also very clear. I referred to this earlier.

Now, when we have a noble figure and an illustrious jurisconsult who has accepted this responsibility, and who has to safeguard not only the country but the Islamic ummah, to whom should we pay our religious dues? Religious dues are paid to the source of emulation. They should be paid to Khamene'i and not to Grand Ayatollah Araki. [passage omitted] There should be a focal point. I am expressing my own views. I am not entitled to issue a fatwa. If I were able to issue a fatwa I would say that definitely the religious dues could not be paid to anyone

except the person who is in practice in charge of the guardianship of the ummah. This is a religious issue.

In this context, I read a fatwa from the imam, and will end my remarks. In "Tahrir" ["Tahrir al-Wasilah", one of Khomeyni's collection of fatwas] about khoms [one fifth of income which should be paid as religious taxes] this is his fatwa. If I wish to read the entire passage it will take a long time. As we all know, even concerning the funds which should be paid to the sayyids the imam wrote that, contary to the fatwa of many jurisconsults who believed that the inviduals could pay their dues for the sayyid directly to the deserving sayyids, the imam said that this should be done with the permission of the vali-ye amr, it should be under the supervision of the vali-ye amr. It means that it should be centralized.

If you remember, in one of his speeches in the early days he also said, for instance, that the khoms from the Tehran bazaar or Shiraz or Esfahan bazaars should not only be paid to the poor sayyids. It means that this huge income should be spent under the supervision of the source of emulation and the leader in a way which is in the interest of Islam and the Muslims. It cannot be divided. This is the fatwa by the imam. [passage omitted]

We should pay greater attention to these issues and pay greater attention to principles. A certain gentleman tells me that in the constitution it has been said that to be a source of emulation is not a condition for becoming a leader. I know the constitution as well as you. To be a source of emulation is not a condition for becoming a leader; but, if you understand academic language, who has said that to be a leader stops one from being a source of emulation? Being a source of emulation is not necessary for the leader, but being a leader does not prevent one from being a source of emulation. If he possesses those conditions and priorities, the constitution has not made a ban. [passage omitted]

As you know, the esteemed Friday imam of Moscow is present in our gathering. I welcome him and his companions. [passage omitted]

Nateq-Nuri Follows Khamene'i's Religious Rulings

LD1812161793 Tehran IRNA in English 1551 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 18, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said here Saturday [18 December] that in matters regarding religion he was following the rulings of leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i and that he has recommended to his family members to follow suit.

He said that Ayatollah Khamene'i's competence to be a mojtahid (religious authority) was ratified by the Council of Guardians immediatley after the departure of the founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeyni in 1989, he said.

The Majlis speaker made the remarks in a speech to a group of university students and in response to a question on the state of marja'yat following the passing away of Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Golpaygani.

He said a qualification that a maraja' taqlid (religious authority whose rulings in religious matters are pursued by his followers) should have is his being a mojtahid.

The meeting took place on the martyrdom anniversary of prominent alim and university professor Dr. Mohammad Mofatteh which is marked as the day of unity between theological schools and universities.

Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani's Will Read in Qom

LD1712234693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2035 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Excerpt] To commemorate the seventh day since the demise of the eminent source of authority [marja'] of the world of Shiism, Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani, may he be admitted to paradise, a memorial service was held in Qom's Azam mosque on Friday evening.

The ceremony was attended by the representative of the eminent leader [Khamene'i]; the representative of Grand Ayatollah Araki; Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni; members of the family of Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani; a number of members of the Assembly of Experts; a number of Majles deputies; members of the Guardian Council; a number of ministers; the state Prosecutor General; members of the society of seminary teachers; the director and members of the supreme council for the management of the Qom seminary; a large number of theologians, clergymen, and students of the Qom seminary and of seminaries throughout the country; civil and military officials; and a large number of people from the city of Qom and from other towns throughout our Islamic homeland.

After prayers and dirges in memory of the demise of that eminent Shi'ite source of authority, Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani's will was read out by Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Golpayegani, that eminent authority's son.

The will, which consists of a preface, five points and one concluding clause and which was drawn up on 22 August 1993, first calls on everyone to perform that which is religiously necessary and to refrain from that which is forbidden, and advises scholars of seminaries to be united and to avoid all dissension, for the sake of the greatness of seminaries, especially the Qom seminary.

Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani's will also describes the remarkable splendor of the Qom seminary after Iran's Islamic Revolution as a result of the guidance, propagation activities, efforts and selflessness of worthy theologians and eminent jurisconsults and stresses the need for

safeguarding the independence of seminaries and having them managed under the supervision of grand sources of authority [marajeh ezam].

The will speaks of the need for the preservation of the principle of the Islamic republic, calls on officials to make the system more in keeping with Islam, and asks the Muslim nation of Iran to spare no effort to protect the achievements of the Islamic Revolution. [passage omitted]

Russian Ambassador Comments on Relations, Trade

LD1912144393 Tehran IRNA in English 1422 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 19, IRNA—Despite provocations by the West, Russia will never seek to confront Islam and rather wants to have cordial relations with Muslim states, Russian Ambassador to Tehran Sergey Tretyakov told KAYHAN HAVAI weekly in an interview appearing in its latest issue.

He said the Soviet occupation of Muslim Afghanistan was a grave mistake. "We have learned that we should not seek confrontation with Muslim countries. One of our fundamental policies is to establish good relations with Islamic states," he said.

Tretyakov said Russia was not opposed to the revival of Islam in the former Soviet Muslim republics. "Muslims in Central Asia are returning to their Islamic culture. Islam is an integral part of their culture and heritage and Russia sees no threat and no need to oppose them."

The Russian ambassador said that Russia was committed to all the agreements reached between Tehran and Moscow during Soviet era.

Bilateral trade between Iran and Russia last year stood at dlrs. 500 million, KAYHAN HAVAI said.

Tretyakov said that Russia reached an agreement in principle with Iran to set up a power plant in Iranian southern city of Bushehr and complete a plant left unfinished by Siemens of Germany.

Despite Washington's opposition to Russia's involvement in the project, he said, "we are determined to go ahead with it. We have an independent policy in our relations with Iran."

Tretyakov said nothing would stop Russia from transferring modern technology to Muslim states.

Future of Nuclear Plant Discussed

NC1912135493 Paris AFP in English 1327 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec 19 (AFP)—Russia is determined to help Iran build a nuclear power plant in the southern port city of Bushehr, but financial problems have delayed the project, the Russian ambassador said here.

In an interview with the weekly KAYHAN HAVAI, Sergey Tretyakov said an agreement had been reached with Iran "in principle" to set up the plant in Bushehr on the Gulf, and to complete another left unfinished by a German company.

"Despite opposition from Washington, we are determined to go ahead with the project," he was quoted as saying. "We have an independent policy with respect to Iran."

Tretyakov said negotiations were underway and the project would be implemented only if "financial problems are sorted out," but he did not clarify what the problems were.

Diplomats here said Iran, faced with a serious cash crisis, had asked Moscow to finance the project, but Russia had refused, due to its own economic problems.

Discussions between Iran and Russia have been going on for more than a year over the purchase of two 440-megawatt VVER-440-213 nuclear reactors for the new plant.

The German corporation Siemens launched the project when the late shah was in power, but broke off work during the Islamic revolution and the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The cost of the project has been put at 3.7 billion dollars.

Iran has repeatedly called for work to resume but the German government has refused, amid concerns that it could be accused of aiding nuclear proliferation in a country suspected by the West of aiming to build nuclear weapons.

The possibility of Russian involvement in finishing the plant, which is 80 percent complete, was discussed during a trip to Moscow by an Iranian delegation in the summer, Tretyakov said in an interview with the daily ABRAR in August.

Iran and Russia signed an accord on civil nuclear cooperation earlier this year, but did not disclose details of the agreement.

During a visit here in March, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said such cooperation would take place within the regulations set by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Tehran has repeatedly accused Western countries, notably the United States, of preventing it from obtaining nuclear technology for civilian purposes.

In February, Iran also signed an accord with China for the purchase of two 300-megawatt nuclear reactors for non-military use. The project with Beijing has also been delayed because of financial problems, according to Chinese diplomats in Tehran.

Velayati Views Results of Trip To Libya, Turkey

LD1912153693 Tehran IRNA in English 1433 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 19, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati returned home Sunday [19 December] at the end of his week-long official visit to Syria, Libya and Turkey.

Velayati said that in his visit to Libya which was made at the invitation of his Libyan counterpart Umar Mustafa al-Muntasir he discussed Tehran-Tripoli economic and political cooperation.

He added that he put efforts made by the two countries within the Middle East for the cause of Palestine on top of the agenda of his talks with Libyan authorities.

Velayati noted that Libya and Iran share a joint stance on the Gaza-Jericho compromise accord, with both viewing it as a "treason" against the Palestinian aspiration.

The foreign minister said in his talks in Tripoli, both sides agreed on a framework for the regulation and acceleration of mutual cooperation.

On his way to Tehran, Velayati also made a stop over in Ankara where he briefly talked with Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin on bilateral cooperation and agenda of the forthcoming meeting of foreign ministers of countries forming the Economic Cooperation Organization.

On the issue of security in the region and along Iran-Turkey border, Velayati said both counties have long been engaged in talks on the matter involving the Interior and Foreign Affairs Ministries of Iran and Turkey.

The talks are to be followed up by Tehran and Ankara during the forthcoming visit of Iran's First Vice-President Hasan Habibi to Ankara.

Velayati Rejects 'Bargaining' With Isreal

NC1712192593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati has reaffirmed Iran's rejection of the bargaining process with the Zionist entity. He told the Beirut newspaper AL-DIYAR that officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran can by no means tolerate selling out Palestine to the Zionists. Palestine, he explained, is an Islamic land and a legitimate homeland for the Palestinians. He said Jerusalem is a sacred city for followers of all divine religions and must be taken out of the Zionists' control.

On the Western and Zionist threats to the Islamic Republic over its opposition to the negotiations in the region, Dr. Velayati said: We will never bargain over the interests of Islam and Muslims, and the Iranian people are ready to defend themselves and the Islamic sanctities.

The foreign minister stressed that Iran and Syria are coordinating their efforts fully in supporting the Palestinian people. Both countries view the Gaza-Jericho agreement as cheaply selling Palestine to the Zionists, he said.

German Official Terms Cooperation 'Fruitful'

LD2012112293 Tehran IRNA in English 1033 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 20, IRNA—The visiting German Deputy Justice Minister Reiner Funke discussed Tehran-Bonn relations and regional developments with Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmud Va'ezi here Sunday [19 December].

Expressing satisfaction over the upward trend of Iran-Germany relations, the German official who arrived here last week heading a delegation, described bilateral cooperation as very "fruitful". He said Tehran is a friend of Bonn, adding that exchange of visits between officials of the two countries would help further promotion of mutual relations.

In response Va'ezi welcomed expanded ties with Germany and said Iran favored constructive ties based on mutual interests.

The two sides also exchanged views on current developments in the Balkans, situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular.

Commentary Views U.S. Policy in Persian Gulf

NC1912162993 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 8 Dec 93 p 16

[Political commentary: "The Inauspicious Intentions of the United States and the Negligence of the Arabs"]

[Text] It was only a few days ago that the U.S. Under Secretary for Policy in the Department of Defense, Frank Wisner, pitched his tent in the Persian Gulf region; and in the course of this visit to the southern littoral states in the Persian Gulf, he is already talking of the dangers of the Islamic Republic of Iran!

On concluding his visit to Qatar he said: This area is in a consistently difficult situation due to the fact that the Iraqi regime continues to pose a danger to its neighbors and people and Iran is involved in a program to produce weapons of mass destruction!

Frank Wisner then said that he is optimistic about boosting cooperation with the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member countries in order to counteract possible threats! He added that the best way to prevent war is by setting up a strong deterrent force!

The remarks of the Defense Department official are worth assessing from the following viewpoints:

1. The Americans continue to use the ploy of instilling fear in the Arabs in the Persian Gulf region in order to

sell weapons to them. The profound economic stagnation in the United States and the West and the narrowing of their sphere of domination of the Islamic and Third World countries has motivated Washington and some other Western countries to make up illusory dangers in order to preserve their interests in the Persian Gulf and to pillage the oil resources. That is why they deem Iran a danger equal to Iraq—which has caused two wars in the Persian Gulf—in order to deceive the simpleton shaykhs!

2. It is true that Iraq ignited the conflagration of war for the past decade, causing great damage and inflicting immense losses on the regional peoples' resources and interests. However, an assessment of the roots of this warmongering shows that the Iraqi regime at that time enjoyed the intense support of the United States and powerful Western governments. The Arab regimes also provided logistical and financial support to the aggressor.

Therefore, it is clear that the United States has never been and never will be interested in the peace and security of the Persian Gulf region.

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran has proved that it is a trustworthy friend of the Arabs and Muslims. The question that needs answering is why are the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf willing to have their resources and interests plundered by the United States, which wishes to thrust its weapons on them in return for petrodollars?

The Arabs of the Persian Gulf have saturated the international oil market, which has resulted in pressure on the Islamic countries and the Third World and has given a boost to the insolvent economies of the United States and the West.

Why should the halt in Iraqi oil exports be made up for many times over by Saudi Arabia? As a result, Persian Gulf oil is being sold to the United States and the West for a pittance so that they can become more overbearing and audacious in their insults to the Muslims.

Commentary on Algerian Unrest, Prospective Talks

NC1812085093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Commentary by News Commentaries Group]

[Text] The Algerian Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has stipulated its conditions for participating in talks between the opposition and the Algerian Government. In response to the talks committee's invitation for negotiations and for participation in national talks for resolving the Algerian crisis, the chief of the FIS executive council abroad, Rabah Kebir, who is in Germany, yesterday listed five conditions. Foremost among these conditions is the demand for the release of all political prisoners, especially the FIS leaders.

The FIS announced that it is prepared to hold talks only with the Algerian Government and in a third country that will be agreed upon by both sides. The problems currently facing Algeria are not confined to the confrontation between the government's Higher State Council and its opponents, especially the Islamic groups, even though it has embroiled Algeria in a multifaceted crisis and has plunged it in complex difficulties in the political, military, and security fields.

The other problem facing the ruling parties is their intense differences with each other. The talks committee, which has been assigned by the government to hold talks with the opposition groups, has invited the FIS to seek a political solution to the Algerian crisis. Algerian Prime Minister Redha Malek has said that he is only prepared to talk to groups that adhere to the laws of the country. This means that, in the opinion of the Algerian prime minister, the FIS, which has been declared a dissolved group and is the largest and most important opposition group, would be excluded from the talks.

This political difference of opinion has led to contradictory attitudes that, in practice, will hinder the success of the search for an amicable political means of resolving the Algerian crisis. The other contradiction facing the Algerian ruling party and preventing a climate for resolving the crisis is the discordant nature of political and military moves in the country.

Naturally, political negotiations can only take place in an atmosphere of goodwill and amicability. Inviting the opposition to participate in the talks, on one hand, and then firing on them, on the other, will not create a conducive climate for a political solution to the crisis. Therefore, the most important problem facing Algeria at this stage is the ruling party's extreme ambivalence and lack of a definite program. In practice, this has generated diverse attitudes among the opposition, as well.

While the FIS is prepared to participate in talks with the government if its conditions are accepted, there are other groups that are using violence to respond to the violence by the military government. These groups have brought the Algerian Government and its Western allies, especially France, face to face with a proliferating crisis.

Even though the FIS condemns the killings of foreign citizens, it has not been able to refute that it could be a reaction. Therefore, the end of the so-called legitimate tenure of the rule by the government Higher State Council in the next few days is an appropriate opportunity for the Algerian Government to replace it with a national organization based on the will of the people.

Commentary Views Cooperation With Kuwait

NC2012081193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Commentary by News Commentaries Group]

[Text] As you heard in the news, our country's Commerce Ministry officials held talks in Kuwait yesterday on boosting economic cooperation with Kuwait. The talks concentrated on issues relating to maritime transport, expanding the banking network, setting up a joint Iranian-Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and a permanent display center, and amending the current commercial agreement between the two countries to boost economic relations.

A glance at the history of Iranian-Kuwaiti political and economic relations following Kuwait's independence in 1960 shows their deep bilateral relations. These relations were marred during the imposed war due to [Kuwait's] vast financial and propaganda support for Iraq. The end of the imposed war and the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait opened a new chapter in bilateral relations. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which has always opposed military aggression, adopted a principled stance and, remaining neutral in the Persian Gulf war, condemned the Iraqi attack on Kuwait. When the usurping of Kuwait ended, bilateral economic and political relations broadened.

Middle East experts say that broadening regional economic relations among the littoral countries of the Persian Gulf can be considered a suitable model for deepening security and stability in the region. These experts say that in today's circumstances, any investment in security can contribute to economic cooperation instead of centralizing it into military pacts, which have actually given little in return. Such cooperation strengthens joint economic interests among regional countries, which in turn consolidates stability and security in the Persian Gulf countries.

The Iranian stance toward its neighbors in the past few years bears testimony to Iran's desire to deepen political and economic relations. So, Iran welcomes broader relations with the GCC's members.

Interior Minister Visits Hormozgan Province

NC2012081893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] In an interview last night in Bandar-e 'Abbas, the interior minister stated that the government has envisaged important plans that will generate employment and stop the smuggling of goods in Hormozgan Province. Please listen to a report on the interior minister's interview:

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording]: Concluding his one-day visit to Hormozgan Province, Interior Minister Besharati spoke to media correspondents in Bandar-e' Abbas and stressed the government's plans for Hormozgan Province. He said: The extensive plans and development projects, especially the Bafq-Bandar-e 'Abbas railroad project, which will be operational in 15 months, are being implemented. That project will change the face of the province.

He added: To boost economic cooperation in Hormozgan, steps will be taken in conjunction with other ministries on passports for border areas, establishing and expanding border cooperatives, and using other provinces' experiences to set up a border market in the region.

During this interview, the interior minister referred to moves by the powers of world arrogance to tarnish relations between Islamic Iran and the countries of the southern Persian Gulf region especially through its false propaganda on three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf. He added: We are neighbors of these countries, including the United Arab Emirates, which will endure for thousands of years. We believe that any misunderstanding can be resolved through talks. We have cordial relations but if the powers of world arrogance provoke, it is solely to achieve their inauspicious objectives and to protect illicit interests in this sensitive and strategic region of the Persian Gulf.

On management changes in the free zones of Kish and Qeshm, Besharati stated: Despite the changes, these islands remain in Hormozgan Province and the area's governor general deals with every issue concerning them. The interior minister remains attentive to the Province's problems. [end recording]

Stresses 'Neighborly Ties' With UAE

LD2012101293 Tehran IRNA in English 0849 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Bandar Abbas, Hormuzgan Prov., Dec. 20, IRNA—Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammed Besharati here Sunday [19 December] stressed Iran's neighborly ties with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and termed foreign media reports on the Iranian islands as attempts to disturb peace in the region.

Speaking to reporters Besharati, who is on an inspection tour of the province, said that the existing misunderstandings could be settled through negotiations.

He noted that the global arrogance was trying to create tension in the world to preserve its own interests. But, he assured, Iran's neighbours would surely prefer their own interests to those of the aliens.

Besharati emphasized that the government would give top priority to campaign against hooliganism and threats to security in the country. However, he added, those who really repent their wrongdoings would be pardoned.

Pakistan

Iraqi Oil, Goods Said Smuggled In Via Iran

JN1812120393 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Dec 93 P 1

[Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan's report from Peshawar]

[Text] Reliable sources yesterday told AL-HAYAH that large quantities of Iraqi oil, fertilizers, and other products have found their way to Iran, and that some of these products have reached Pakistan.

The sources said these Iraqi products are sold in the free markets of both countries by influential agents and merchants in a clear violation of the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Pakistani authorities have recently confiscated a 10,000-liter oil tanker car that arrived from Iran in the Pakistani town of Kweita. A spokesman for the Pakistani Federal Investigation Agency in Kweita, a town on the border with Iran, said the Iranian owner of the tanker, who was accompanied by a Pakistani driver, works in smuggling goods from and to Iraq.

The Pakistani spokesman said the tanker passed through the Iranian-Pakistani borders in Blutestan region, where inhabitants on both sides of the border belong to the same racial group and make a living from smuggling, including the smuggling of narcotics. The Blutestan corridor is an international route for drug smuggling between Afghanistan and Iran.

The Pakistani driver, identified as Qadir Bakhsh, said he brought the tanker truck from the Tirbit area in Iran to Kweita. He, however, did not say if this was the first attempt or if it was preceded by other attempts.

Experts Said Studying 'Draft' of U.S. Aid Law

BK2012091793 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 10

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 19—Pakistan Sunday [19 December] began a comprehensive analysis of the "discussion draft" of the US Foreign Aid Act 1961 to finalise its decision on how to protect its defence and economic interests.

According to sources in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a copy of the discussion drafts was received from Washington Thursday last. Constitutional, legal and defence experts are closely examining all the aspects of the proposed law and its likely bearing on Pakistan's vital interests.

Pakistan's immediate concern is to take a decision on the 1.4 billion US dollars F-16 programme before Jan 1, 1994 and finalise Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's agenda for her two-day official visit to China which will focus on defence and economic cooperation. Pakistan's political and military leadership has indicated many a time that China was a reliable partner and could make up for the losses Pakistan has to face because of the suspension of the US military assistance.

Though the US sources in the federal capital expressed ignorance about the specific provisions of the "discussion draft" The Muslim has learnt that the discussion draft does not contain the country-specific amendments. From Pakistan's point of view, this means striking down the Pressler Amendment.

According to the US sources, the letter sent to the Congress with the discussion draft says that "the absence of any country-specific language in this draft should not be interpreted as a change in the United States policy towards any country.

According to the sources, the draft seeks to impose generic foreign aid sanctions on the basis of the objectionable activities such as gross human rights violation, terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

The sources said the draft contains the sanctions which are part of the existing Foreign Assistance Act particularly those relating to the nuclear field. Such provisions, the sources said, are drawn from the Glenn, Symington and Solarz amendments. The draft also includes a provision authorising the waiver of the sanctions if it is in the national interest.

According to the US sources, the Pressler standard will remain the essential basis for exercising any national interest waiver and for resuming economic and military assistance, including decisions to sell or transfer military equipment or technology to Pakistan. The sources said that should such a waiver for Pakistan is considered in the future, obviously the US government would consult the Congress. The US officials say that even if a new foreign assistance law without specific reference to Pakistan was passed, the US would continue to apply the Pressler amendment to Pakistan.

Pakistan's Foreign Office sources say though the final shape of the draft legislation which may take up to one year, is likely to be a lot more different than the present one yet Pakistan may be able to assess the final outcome and take decisions on its defence requirements accordingly. "Pakistan cannot afford to delay its vital decisions for one year", the Pakistani sources said. They said "it's a long battle for power-sharing between the US executive and the legislature". It remains to be seen who will be the winner and whether or not it will benefit Pakistan in the final outcome. Therefore, pinning much hopes on the act would be unwise, the Foreign Office sources said. They said going by the past trends of voting in the US Congress, it is very difficult to predict whether the act, which gives more powers to the President would have a smooth sailing. The Foreign Office sources said that Pakistan has asked its lobbying firm Neil and Co, to start contacting senators and congressmen to put Pakistan's nuclear programme and its efforts for nuclear non-proliferation in the correct perspective.

Editorial Backs Bhutto's Priority on Defense

BK1812085993 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 18 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "A Vital National Priority"]

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has rightly emphasised Pakistan's inherent right to fulfil its genuine defence requirements at all costs. Talking to newsmen after visiting the army exercise area near Head Islam, she said her government was assigning top priority to defence and "we will meet all our needs even by remaining hungry and starved." She further stated Pakistan would get F-16 aircraft and their spare parts from the United States under a 1.4 billion-dollar deal. "We will acquire the aircraft and nuclear capability because it is our right." Responding to a question, the Prime Minister observed that her visit to Iran and Turkey was a great success as it would facilitate greater military and economic cooperation among the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] members. Both the countries had expressed their keen interest in reviving mutual collaboration in the spheres of defence and economy. Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto hoped that Turkey would intercede with the U.S. on Pakistan's behalf for having the controversial Pressler Amendment repealed. Giving her impression about the Army Exercise Al-Khalid II, she said total professionalism was the hallmark of Pakistan Army "which has always been acknowledged by our friends and foes." She highly appreciated the standard of peacetime training being imparted to the troops.

The incontrovertible reality is that self-defence is the inalienable right of every nation. It is a universally recognised principle and any deviation from it is simply unthinkable. Pakistan cannot afford to be unmindful of India's superiority in conventional arms and nuclear weapons capability. The truth is that any slackness on its part in meeting the imperatives of defence can imperil its very survival. Yet Pakistan stands fully committed to regional as well as global nuclear non-proliferation. That clearly goes to its credit. It has been proposing the setting up of a nuclear weapons-free zone in South Asia since 1972. In 1991, Pakistan formally suggested the holding of a five-nation conference, with the U.S., Russia and China attending besides Pakistan and India, for achieving that objective. Moreover, on its initiative, the United Nations adopted a resolution for converting South Asia into a nuclear-free zone. But the pity is that India has been constantly spurning the move on one-pretext or another. In this situation, there is no alternative for Islamabad except to maintain its deterrent capability. It goes without saying that a nuclear arms race in the subcontinent can ruin the economies of Pakistan and India and thus aggravate the woes of their masses. The huge funds consumed by it could be diverted towards plans for alleviating poverty, illiteracy, unemployment etc. The U.N. and major world powers like the USA must fulfil their moral obligation to pressurise New Delhi to exercise reason and sanity in its approach to regional and global issues. They can surely make India realise the urgency and utility of a meaningful dialogue with Pakistan on nuclear non-proliferation and the festering issue of Kashmir which has bedevilled relations between the two countries for decades. Pakistan, on its part, has repeatedly expressed its readiness to enter into negotiations with New Delhi. For taking an initiative in that direction, the onus specifically falls on India. It would do well to partake in the foreign secretary level talks scheduled for next month with the openmindedness and flexibility of approach demanded by the occasion. Once the principles are agreed upon, the modalities involved in their implementation could be easily worked out. The fact remains that Pakistan cannot, under any circumstances, take any risk with regard to its sovereignty and territorial solidarity by yielding to any compromise on its defence capability.

Bhutto Comments on Domestic Issues

BK2012051493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that her government will maintain rule of law as it believes in supremacy of law. Speaking to reporters in Islamabad last night on her return from Karachi, she categorically said: We will never target our political rivals. The prime minister regretted that in the past, politicians were implicated in criminal cases, and a situation was created in which it became too difficult for people to differentiate between the guilty and the innocent. When asked whether the government is considering action against those people who implicated politicians in baseless cases in the past, the prime minister said that she is busy with national affairs, including the current situation in occupied Kashmir, foreign visits, and steps for the welfare of people. When she gets some respite from these tasks, the government would certainly look into this matter.

In reply to another question, the prime minister said: Although we support providing speedy and inexpensive justice, speedy trial courts will not remain for a long time. However, she made it clear that as far as the antiterrorism courts are concerned, the government will not ignore the position of Pakistan-India relations, because India has always been creating trouble in Pakistan.

In response to a question, the prime minister said there is no crisis in Punjab, and the government in the province is stable, as it enjoys absolute majority in the provincial assembly. She said the situation in Punjab is totally different from that of Balochistan and Northwest Frontier Province where a large number of members have been appointed as ministers to maintain a majority. Benazir Bhutto said there is complete understanding between the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] and Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo group, and the Punjab chief minister is fully capable of leading the province. The prime minister said we have full confidence in the Punjab chief minister, and there is complete understanding between us. On Syed Faisal Saleh Hayat [former minister in erstwhile PPP government], the prime minister said the reason for his presence in Punjab is that there are 100 PPP members in the provincial assembly.

In reply to a question on Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM], Benazir Bhutto said the process of talks between the Sindh chief minister and the MQM are

continuing, and we are trying for some accord as the MQM had supported our candidate in the presidential elections. The vaccum created after the cessation of understanding in 1989 has been filled now.

Answering a question on the allegation of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Sharif group against the government on late General Asif Nawaz [former Army chief] case, the prime minister said: We do not believe in acts of revenge against our political opponents. She said that her government did not make even a minute's delay in publishing the report of the forensic experts in this regard.

In reply to another question, the prime minister said it is by God's grace that Asif Ali Zardari has been honorably acquitted in the Ghulam Hussain Unnar case, as it was a baseless case. The then Punjab chief minister had allotted a plot of land worth millions of rupees as a bribe to the wife the complainant Murtaza Bukhari.

Minister: Forces in 'Full Control' of Border

BK1912144693 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The National Assembly was assured this afternoon that our armed forces are fully alert and vigilant to defend the frontiers of the country. Responding to a call-attention notice on recent exchanges of fire between Pakistan and India on the Line of Control, the federal minister for law, justice and parliamentary affairs, Syed Iqbal Haider, told the house on behalf of the defense minister that our forces are in full command and continue to monitor the situation. He said whenever there is a violation of the Line of Control, our Foreign Office lodges a protest with India. He said that the call-attention notice was based on a highly exaggerated report in an Urdu daily. The notice was given by Main Mohammad Yasin Khan Wattoo, Rao Qaiser Ali Khan, Mr. Mohammad Birjis Tahir, Chaudhary Anwar Ali Cheema, and Chaudhary Mohammad Jafar Iqbal.

PPP Opposes India's Security Council Membership

BK1712155193 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] A spokesman of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] told newsmen in Islamabad today that India is openly violating human rights in occupied Kashmir and disregarding the United Nations by consistently ignoring the UN resolutions for holding a plebiscite in the occupied valley. He said that in view of this, India is not eligible for the membership of the Security Council. The spokesman said that the United Nations by making India a member of the Security Council will in fact violate the UN principles of law, justice and equality and create a threat to its own existence.

Defense Minister Receives Bangladeshi Official

BK2012113893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] The federal minister for defense, Mr. Aftab Shaban Mirani, has said exchange of visits between Pakistan and Bangladesh would benefit the two countries and enhance their cooperation in various fields, including defense. He was talking to visiting Bangladeshi defense secretary, Mr. Hasinur Rahman, who called on him in Islamabad today. The defense minister appreciated the role of Bangladesh as the chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC] and said the concept of SAARC was excellent. If the countries of the region cooperate, it would certainly pave way for the progress and prosperity of the people and create peaceful environment in the region. Mr. Hasinur Rahman said that there existed cordial and fraternal relations between the two countries and his visit would help identify areas of cooperation to mutual benefit of the two brotherly people.

Court Acquits National Assembly Member

BK1912082993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] In Karachi today, the special court for suppression of terrorist activities comprising Mr. Ali Ahmad Junejo honorably acquitted Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, MNA [member of National Assembly], in the famous Ghulam Hussain Unnar case. The court held that the approver, Atish Manzur, made three different statements before the magistrate under Section 164 and there was material contradictions in the statements. Details of the judgment are still coming in.